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THE
AWAKENING OF ITALY.

THE
AWAKENING OF ITALY
AND THE
CRISIS OF ROME.

BY THE
REV. J. A. WYLIE, LL.D.

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PREFACE.

THE following work is founded, partly, on the personal observations of the Author, who has now made four visits to Italy, and resided about a year in that country; and partly on the study of the Italian journals, the numerous pamphlets, political and religious, which have recently issued from the press of Italy, the Reports of Boards of Commerce, and the Blue Books of the Italian Government.

The subjects discussed in this volume, and the method of their arrangement, may be stated in a few words.

First comes a glance at the Past of Italy. Founding a stable order in the earth, Italy diffused amongst the nations the arts and letters which she had received from Greece, and thus became the first great secular educator of the world.

There follows, *secondly*, the Italy of To-day. On the surface is seen the absence of great principles, the want of fixity in all minds, and the conflict of numerous parties, political and religious; while, below the

surface, is a dense substratum of popular superstition, which crops up in processions, pilgrimages, and enslaving and demoralising beliefs.

Thirdly, the Awakening of the Italian Intellect comes under consideration, as shown in the demand for political and ecclesiastical independence in the north of Italy, the revival of literature and the fine arts in Tuscany, and the resurrection of pantheistic philosophy in the south of the Peninsula.

The *fourth* head comprises the Industrial, Commercial, and Legislative Movements in Italy, as seen in the rapid advance of its trade, and the efforts of its Parliament to frame a national system of education, to suppress the conventual establishments, and to emancipate marriage from the exclusive control of the priesthood.

Fifth is the Evangelisation of the Peninsula. This is destined to be the crown of the whole movement; but, unhappily, it is, as yet, only in its beginnings. Intellect is awakening in Italy; but conscience, "the divine force in human society," as D'Aubigné has styled it, still slumbers.

The closing portion of the volume is devoted to a consideration of Rome and its Crisis, embracing the present state of the pontifical government and the condition of its subjects; the relation of the temporal power to the rest of Europe, and the effect its extinction is likely to have upon Italy and upon the balance of power in Europe.

The Italians loudly proclaim their settled conviction that the temporal power of the Papacy is in antagonism to civilisation. After a thousand years' trial, this is now their unanimous conclusion. But the pope, on the other hand, in his Encyclical (December 8th, 1864), as solemnly declares that the temporal power is a right inherent in the church, and, in short, an essential part of Christianity, so that to destroy the temporal power is to destroy Christianity. Thus Italy finds herself in the extraordinary predicament of having to choose between civilisation and Christianity—of having to abandon progress or the church.

The great problem which has exercised the more civilised nations of Europe these twelve centuries past may now be regarded as completely worked out. The Protestant nations have demonstrated, theoretically, that Roman Catholicism is in antagonism with the Bible. The Popish nations have proved, practically, that Roman Catholicism is in antagonism with civilisation. Both have arrived substantially at the same conclusion, namely, that the Papacy is impossible with free government, civilisation, and progress.

Further, all the great interpreters of prophecy, for the last two hundred years, have pointed to the era 1866–7 as one likely to form a turning-point in the history of the Papacy. And now that this era is come, it is a striking coincidence that we find that the great problem of Christendom is worked out, on both the Catholic and non-Catholic sides; that the Franco-

Italian convention forecasts, if it does not decree, the end of the "temporal power," and that Europe is waiting with no ordinary anxiety the lifting up of the curtain, at the departure of the army of occupation from Rome, to know what changes, political and social, the future has in store for it.

The Author has spared no pains to observe correctly and to judge impartially as to the present position and prospects of Italy. But other students of the Italian question may dissent from the views which he has expressed. It is therefore right that he should say that he alone is responsible for the statements of this volume—not the Society under whose auspices it is issued.

EDINBURGH.

January, 1866.

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THE AWAKENING OF ITALY.

CHAPTER I.

FROM ENGLAND TO ITALY.

ON the morning of the 14th of July, 1864, I found myself off the mouth of the Maas, in the North Sea. I had gone to rest off the coast of England, the vessel nobly ploughing the deep, in the face of a rather stiff breeze, and marking her path by a long trail of smoke which darkened the night-sky, and a broad line of spray which whitened the ocean. I awoke to find the steamer at rest, although not in port. What had happened to the good ship? Nothing to cause the least uneasiness. Having arrived at the river's mouth ere there was water to cross the bar, we had to lie to, for some hours, till the tide should make.

The halt could not have been more opportune even if it had been made on purpose. Some three miles off was the coast of Holland: a broad belt of muddy water, sorely vexed by the winds and the tides, dividing us from it. That shore I found as prosaic as I knew the history of Holland to be grand. A long low dyke of white sand, torn and jagged atop, and here and there capped with long wiry grass, was all that was

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visible of the renowned country which I was approaching. No tall cliff, no bold headland, no frowning rampart, met the view. Holland had committed the keeping of her rich pastures and her noble cities to this sand dyke. A frail barrier, it looked, as ever kept out tumbling ocean. But that dyke had stood when the rocks that guarded other countries had crumbled into powder, faithfully guarding the treasures committed to its keeping. Within, the land spread out its green bosom to the sky; outside, the baffled ocean kept hurling its mountainous billows, but only, by each successive stroke, to wedge the sands that defended Holland more compactly together.

The tide rose, the bar was crossed, and away we went, threading the windings of the Maas, on our way to Rotterdam. Now it was that the land disclosed its treasures. It reminded me of a shy but richly endowed mind, gradually permitting an insight into the powers of imagination and reason with which it is fraught, or of those mansions in oriental lands whose hovel-like exterior but adds to the astonishment with which the visitor gazes on the wealth and splendour which he finds within. So did Holland, its border of sand hillocks, besprinkled with tufts of grass, once passed, disclose its wealth. I found it all verdant—a land that pours into the lap of its inhabitants, without stop or stint, the riches of the earth, the fruits of the tree, and the golden gains of commerce. But of these I do not speak.

The most marvellous thing about this marvellous land is its history. In the sixteenth century, when the Reformation was young, and Philip II.,—monarch of an empire prouder and stronger than even Rome

in her palmy days,—stood over the bleeding body of European liberty, with sword uplifted, who dared be the champion of a cause that seemed “drawn to death and ready to perish”? France wavered, Germany stood back, England was lukewarm, Italy and her pope sided with Spain. It was the little Holland that threw down the ‘gage of battle to the tyrant. The contest that followed is one of the grandest epics in the world’s history. Spain won battles, and Holland lost them; and yet every victory brought the former nearer to defeat, and every defeat brought the latter nearer to victory. An enigma this which men have great difficulty in reading. Under her great leader, William of Orange, Holland advanced, as the Church herself advances, through a series of discomfitures to glorious triumph. Not otherwise can the highest order of victories be achieved. A vulgar success may be in the power of the strongest battalion, but the nation that would aspire to garlands that fade not must by other means win the prize. “He that loseth his life shall find it” is the dictate of inspiration, and the saying is true of nations as of individuals. In the great contest in which she engaged, Holland risked her life: she buried herself beneath the waves of the North Sea; she died, and from that death she rose to a new and higher life. She returned from the depths of her grave to find that dominion, liberty, learning, piety, and wealth which she seemed to renounce for ever when she preferred death to submission. The mighty Spain quickly shrivelled into insignificance. The little Holland sent her ships, her colonists, and her fame to the ends of the earth; and had she kept steady hold upon the principles of her heroic age, she

might at this day have been, in point of maritime standing, the "England" of the world.

Leaving the city of Erasmus,—the sage to whom Rotterdam gave a cradle, and Basle a tomb,—seated amid its canals, its meadows and its linden trees, we turn our face toward the Alps. Far distant, as yet, are their white tops; and still farther away is the land beyond them to which we are bound—the land which owns the magic name of Italy. Many a deep scar mars her beauty, and the shadow of many a woe darkens her glory; still such a fascination is Italy's, that year by year thousands are drawn across the snows of her mighty Alps to gaze upon her, and such a power of entwining herself around the heart does she still possess, that he who has seen her once evermore wishes to see her again. Italy reads the same great lesson to the world with Holland, but she reads it in the inverse order. She saved her life in the sixteenth century, and we know at what cost. But of this anon.

We traverse the rich pastures of Holland, the corn lands of Belgium, the thriving manufacturing towns of the Walloon territory, and now the "milk-white" Rhine is flowing past us. The Rhine is a poem. It is as sweet a lyric as ever was made up of flowing stream, of hoar town, of castle-crowned rock, and vine-clad hill. Onward it flows, summer and winter, hymning softly the music of old days, and whispering legendary tales of the mailed knights who did battle upon its banks, and feasted joyously in the lordly halls which now moulder in heaps beside its stream. Had we the traveller's ear we would say to him,—Visit the Rhine once, but only once, and then it will live in

your memory a thing of beauty. On occasion of the first voyage up it—for no traveller of taste will sail down the Rhine—it is charming. On the second it is pleasant: on the third it is—what shall we say?—a thrice-told tale, which makes the hearer yawn a little. More especially will this be the case if, as happened to ourselves, the traveller should have chanced in the interval to visit the glen of the Caledonian canal, and enjoy the superb sail betwixt Inverness and Oban. Here the tourist finds himself now on a river, now on a mirror-like loch, and now on an arm of the sea. Now he threads the mazes of some valley, narrow as that of the Rhine, and as romantically and richly clad; and now he surveys the grandeurs of some Alpine pass, set round with dark towering mountains. It is the Rhine and Switzerland in one.

Passing Basle, Calvin's Wartburg—for here, in the obscure house of Catherine Klein, did the great chief of the Reformation compose his "Institutes"—passing Zurich, the home of one of the clearest intellects of the Reformation, whose labours are to be traced at this day in the mental independence and industrial activity of the population of Zurich, and still pursuing our way along the banks of the Upper Rhine, where the tall crag, towering to heaven, stands sentinel, and the white torrent bursting from the darkness of pine forest, or leaping from cliff, as it rolls down from the snow-clad hills, tumbles into the river, we arrive at the little town of Coire, at the foot of the Splügen Pass.

The first passage of the Alps into Italy has a fascination which belongs to no after visit. It is a journey that stands alone in the traveller's recollection. It cannot be made a second time. He has seen the land;

he has been thrilled by the first touch of its soil, and that is a rapture which returns no more. But never can a journey into Italy be an altogether commonplace affair. It will stir the traveller's pulse let him repeat it ever so oft. The Alpine sublimities through which his way lies; the sudden contrast offered by the land itself, in its softness and beauty, to the storm-swept and ice-clothed pinnacles from which he has descended; the serene light that bathes earth and sea; the dazzling brilliance that tints every object, all combine to make the traveller feel that this is a land like no other, at least on the north of the Alps. And while the rapture of the first moments lasts, "this," says he, "is a new world, the curse has not touched it, it is walled off from the rest of the earth by its happier moral condition not less than by its great physical barriers; so must the world have looked when it was young, and the primæval doom had not yet roughened its seas or darkened its sky, or smitten its soil. Such an air of deep, majestic repose must Eden have worn."

But the traveller soon discovers that he has too hastily judged, and that whatever be the points in which Italy excels other countries, it has no pre-eminence in respect of its moral condition. Its Alps, clad though they be in the terrors of an eternal winter, as in no age have they been able to keep out the invader, so neither have they been able to keep out the curse. All climes, whether the sun gilds them with glory or the tempest shrouds them in night, whether spring clothes them in fadeless verdure or continual frost holds them in icy chains, have been dealt with impartially in this respect. Nay, the traveller discovers that not only has the curse entered

this land, but that here its prints are deeper and blacker than elsewhere. Its blight lies heavily upon the earth—it lies yet more heavily upon man. It is the soul that is here eclipsed.

But let us forward, and mark the efforts of the country to rise above the doom that has so long pressed upon it.

Four great passes lead into Italy from the north, and all are of surpassing grandeur. These are the fitting vestibules of a land which was the cradle of the arts, and, for a brief space, the temple of a pure Christianity. By which of these superb gateways shall we enter? We select the Splugen, not because it is superior to the rest, but because it is the only one of the four we have not as yet traversed, for this is now the seventh time, in going and returning, that the author has crossed the mountains. As our wont is, we shall make the journey on foot and alone. Not otherwise, as it appears to us, can the full power of the Alps be felt. With the prattle of a party or the rumble of a diligence in one's ear, the mood of mind is disturbed, and the reverent solitude and majestic grandeur of the mountains are only partially enjoyed. Those who go to see the Alps as they would go to see an opera will not agree with us, of course.

The morning was lovely. The sweet nest that holds the little town of Coire was full of light, rained from the sky, and reflected in dazzling showers from the white peaks that rise round it in mid-heaven. The length of the road, some thirty or thirty-five miles, the toil of the ascent, the heat of noontide, were all forgotten. I thought only of the valleys so rich in grass and wild flowers; the gorges, with their jutting crags and their darkness; the icy peaks, high up amid the

lustrous stars to be revealed at night; and I regretted that, instead of one such day, there were not a dozen before me. Sending forward my daughters, who accompanied me, by diligence, and promising to rejoin them on the mountain's top at night, I set out alone.

If the Rhine may be called a lyric, the Alps may be truly styled an epic. An epic they are whose strains are ever varying. They sweep over the whole scale, from its lowest to its loftiest note. They begin, deep and soft, in the quiet valleys, with their still waters, which lie enfolded in the giant arms of the mountain—"beauty sleeping in the lap of terror." Anon the strains rise; they are pealed forth in the torrent's dash and the river's thunder, which, echoing from cliff to cliff, and reverberating from hill to hill, fill the air with sounds that at once soothe and enliven. And now there comes a new burst; this time the hymn rises into terror; the mountains close in—they hang over; you enter the jaws of the gorge; night spreads her wing across your path; your imagination begins to conjure up unknown dangers, and to people the pass with shapes of terror; you think regretfully of the sun-lit vales beneath—they are gone, and the rocks have shut you in. Taller grow the cliffs, thicker grows the gloom, but at last, through the riven mountains, appears once more the day. You never thought the light so sweet as now. You quicken your steps; soon the pass is behind you, and the pasture lands, with their streamlets, their herds, and their deep silence, spread out illimitably on all sides; and thus the hymn becomes low and soft once more, preparatory to reaching its final swell in the grand peaks

that crown the mountain. Here in this region of mystery and terror, amid the rush of the young rivers, the thunder of the avalanche, and the howling of the tempest which thence goes forth to whiten the vales with its snows, or darken them with its mists, does this epic find at last its climax.

It was some few hours after noon ere I came to the Via Mala. This is the finest part of the Splugen Pass; indeed, some account it the finest thing in the Alps. I cannot say that I am altogether of their opinion. Wild and savage it truly is. The tall cliffs, bending across the gorge, seem almost to embrace. The woods hang in thick masses overhead. The day seems to be suddenly eclipsed; and looking down into the abyss, in search of the Rhine, which struggles through it, the eye loses itself in darkness. Still I think I have seen things as terrific as the Via Mala among the Alps, about which not so much is said.

It is instructive to reflect that it was the genius of War that first pierced the Alps. Here surely is a proof that the Power that presides over the universe is a purely beneficent one, for how otherwise could it happen that Evil always in the long run becomes the minister and pioneer of Good? The Bible Society never could have made the Simplon or the Splugen Pass. It had no funds wherewith to accomplish undertakings like these. But what the Bible Society could not do, Napoleon did. He had men and money enough at his command; and now the roads, constructed for cannon and soldiers, have become, and will long continue to be, the great highway of the Bible and the Evangelist. Nor could all the religious societies in Britain have stirred up the four great wars which have been waged since

1856, and which have opened so large a portion of the world to the Gospel—Turkey, India, China, and Italy. Yet even if the good men who compose these societies had met and planned these four campaigns, nothing could they have done more effectually fitted to gain their own special objects. Like Napoleon hewing the Alps for his cannon, these wars have hewed gaps for the Bible in the great barriers that fenced around these several countries. Let us have patience. When the world has gone a little way forward, it will be seen that War has been a “hewer of wood and a drawer of water” to Christianity.

I was traversing the pasture-lands, dotted over with flocks and quiet hamlets, and was yet a long way short of my halting-place for the night, when the shadows began to lengthen, and the purple of eve to clothe the sides of the mountain; but the heats of the day were past, the air was now cool, and this allowed me to quicken my pace. But with all my efforts, night fell while yet there remained some eight or ten miles of the way to be travelled. This was my true *Via Mala*. Leaving the open pasture-lands, the road now entered the higher defiles of the Alps, winding underneath great cliffs, and keeping close by the infant Rhine, whose murmur I could hear. Sometimes the path plunged into pine forests, at other times it threaded rocky dells. The hours seemed long in the darkness. And now the stars, large and brilliant, began to thicken overhead and grow into an exceeding great army. By the wayside, amid the rich grass, the glowworm lit her lamp. And still further to beguile the way, the pure lambent lightning of the Alps broke beautifully forth, and shed a transient glory over the mountains. The hour was

late, but at last, wayworn and footsore, I descried, to my great joy, at a little distance before me, the village of the Splugen, reposing amid the rocky scalps and snow-streaked summits of the mountains.

All night long the sound of streams falling from rocks was heard. These I knew were the infant sources of the Rhine. In the now far-off Holland I had seen it a broad river, with the ships and the merchandise of nations on its bosom. Here it was a tiny rivulet. How like the movement in Italy which I was on my way to trace out. As yet only a few drops of the Water of Life trickle down here and there in that land. But these few drops will unite, will grow into a river; and that river will be seen at a future day going forth into many a land, and bearing on its majestic flood the fulness of heavenly blessing, wherewith to enrich all the nations of the earth.

CHAPTER II.

INFLUENCE OF ITALY AT THE GREAT HISTORIC EPOCHS.

WE place ourselves at once in Italy.

There are certain countries, like certain men, which have been set for the rising and the falling of the world. Italy is one of these. From early times Italy is seen to head the world's march. She has been as a soul to the nations. She has known how to enkindle them with her fire, how to rule them by her spirit, and how to make them partners with herself in civilisation and glory.

Rome was the first great civiliser of the earth. She found the young nations running wild in their woods and wildernesses, turning the world into a great playground, delighting in little besides cruel and bloody sports, and no one can tell how long that wild riot might have lasted had not Rome stepped in, and with her great voice commanded silence, and told the nations to come to school and prepare for the real business of life.

And to school Rome did compel the nations to come, our own country among the rest, and holding her rod over their heads, she compelled them to learn their letters—to forego barbarian indolence for mental discipline. It was a great and a difficult service; and truly Italy deserves well of the world for having

rendered it. It cost her the thought of her writers, the toil of her legislators, and the blood of her warriors.

Greece, aforetime, had aspired to this great office : but Greece failed to be, what many thought she was destined to be, the world's educator. Greece had one half century of intense brilliancy ; but after that marvellous outburst of intellectual power, she sank exhausted. She had many of the higher requisites for the office to which she aspired, but she wanted some of the secondary ones. She never could maintain discipline in her school. Besides, Greece never could let herself down to the capacity of her pupils. She always would be teaching them something abstruse, when she ought to have taught them something elementary. She always would be teaching them philosophy, when she ought to have taught them their letters. Greece was too purely intellectual. Her habits of thought were too abstract. She was too little practical, too much impelled by passion, and too little guided by principle, to be capable of those long-sustained, persevering, and painstaking efforts which alone could tame the barbarism and enlighten the ignorance of the world.

Still she did an immense service. Greece prepared the elements of the world's education. Her schools and academies were the workshops in which were forged the living forces which, in the hands of Rome, were to quicken and vitalise the nations. Rome, that she might be the master, first became the pupil. She sat down at the feet of Greece, and the truths which the Athenian intellect had elaborated, Rome received, and grafting them upon her own more practical genius, she entered into the great office which Greece, after a glorious commencement, had been compelled to

vacate. Rome's iron hand bent the nations to her yoke, and her master-mind moulded them into her image. Thus, first, with Italy the world arose.

In the morning of Christianity, Italy is again seen taking precedence: a second time with her the world rises. The Jew thought that to his country would this honour be assigned. But, no: Judea retires from the world's sight, a great cloud covering it, to reappear in brighter and purer glory, but not till the "fulness of the time;" and Italy takes its place. Carrying over to Christianity, so far as she became Christian, the same practical and manly qualities which had given her the dominion of the world, Rome became the leader of the churches, as she had aforetime been the leader of the nations. The Roman church was renowned throughout the earth for its faith, and faith is the master principle in Christianity,—the highest grace of the individual, and the noblest attribute of society. Faith, in the pagan sense, was the characteristic of the ancient Roman; faith, in the evangelic sense, became the peculiar characteristic of the Christian Roman. Neither Ephesus, nor Corinth, nor Athens attained to the rank of Rome. To her the other churches of Christendom looked up. When difficulties arose, it was her counsel which they sought. When quarrels broke out, it was to her mediation that they submitted. The pre-eminence thus accorded her, begot in her pride, and pride is fatal to faith, inasmuch as it leads to a reliance on self instead of a reliance on God. Lifted up, that church slighted the warning which Paul had uttered in the epistle which he specially addressed to her, "Thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded but fear: for if God spared not

the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee." She fell, and by her fall pulled down Christendom.

There followed a night of a thousand years; but at last the morning began to shine forth. A third time Italy is seen in the van of the movement. She was the first in that great resurrection of nations, to use Gibbon's words, "to cast away her shroud." It was in Italy that what is known as the *Renaissance* broke forth. Of all the civilising instrumentalities, speech is perhaps the most powerful. The first of the western nations to form her tongue was Italy. From the era of the Gothic invasion a barbarous jargon, of which the principal constituent was Latin, had been the *lingua franca* of Europe; but now the ear began to be charmed by the perfect melody and wondrous flexibility which the Italian language so early attained, and in which to this day it has no rival among the tongues of modern Europe, and has never been surpassed save by the speech of ancient Attica.

In the very dawn of modern letters—indeed almost before the dawn—appears Dante. A gloomy grandeur encompasses him, as it is meet there should in the case of one who starts as it were out of the night; but that fierce and murky splendour soon mellows into a soft brilliant light, as in Petrarch, Ariosto, and Boccaccio, by whom the proto-poet of modern times was followed. Poetry, like the morning star, but heralded the coming of the day of philosophy and science. Politian now appears in the same land; and his deep translucent wisdom, coming after the frivolous and wild theorisings of the schoolmen, betokens the awakening of mind from long and unnatural sleep. Galileo succeeds, who opens

the path of true science, by recalling men to the study of nature. Observing the vibrations of the great lamp which still hangs suspended from the cathedral roof of Pisa, and watching the stars from the summit of his tower, whose ruins are still visible on a small height on the south of Florence, he deduces some of the more important truths of modern astronomical science; which, however, Rome compelled him in her dungeons to recant. Next comes the father of maritime discovery: for Columbus, who could see a world in the darkness of the western ocean, and who may be truly said to have discovered America, long before his keel had touched its strand, or its hills had been descried from his mast-head, was a native of Genoa. Thus had the arts and sciences a second birth in Italy, and from this their old cradle they went forth to find anew dwelling-places in other lands.

Now came the era of Cosmo, the wealthy Florentine merchant, and the founder of the princely house of the Medici. Smitten with the rising passion for letters, and lavishing his patronage upon the cultivators of literature, his native city, Florence, became in time a second Athens. His ships visited every shore of the old world, and along with the various merchandise of the Levant, and of the Indian and African seas, they brought home bales of Hebrew, Greek, and Arabic manuscripts, which had been long buried in the darkness of distant monasteries and libraries. These formed the foundation of that magnificent collection of ancient manuscript works, amounting to some ten thousand in all, which astonishes the traveller at this day in the library of San Lorenzo at Florence.

His yet more illustrious grandson, Lorenzo the

Magnificent, displayed the same fondness for letters, and extended the same patronage to their cultivators. With the sympathy of a scholar and the hospitality of a prince, he welcomed the learned men whom the triumph of the Turkish arms compelled to flee from Constantinople, thus embellishing his court with scholars and philosophers, as other princes adorn theirs with nobles and courtiers. Lorenzo was specially enamoured with the Platonic philosophy, which had now revived through the study of the Greek tongue. The centre of a brilliant circle, which assembled night by night in his villa on the slopes of Fiesoli, he passed the delicious twilights talking of the doctrines of Plato and anticipating the wonders of the new age which was rising on the world.

By-and-bye a purer and a holier light than that of Platonism broke on Southern Europe, but, alas! Italy closed her gates on that light. She who had opened her arms to the scholars of the East, she who had lavished her patronage on the disciples of Plato, could find no reward but dungeons and stakes for the teachers of the Reformation. Italy fell a third time, and by her fall dragged down the half of Europe into the old darkness. Thus with Italy has the world risen, and with Italy has the world fallen, not once, but many times.

It is three centuries since the events of which we have spoken; and these have been no ordinary centuries. In stirring incident and rapid evolution, in the crimes which darken them and the virtues which make them glorious, in the sudden fall of mighty kingdoms and the equally sudden rise of small ones to greatness, these three centuries surpass all the ages

that have gone before. Nor is it difficult to explain this. They are the winding-up of the drama of former times, preparatory to a new age. If not history's culminating point, yet they draw towards it and usher it in. But if the world has passed under new conditions, it is still true that Italy is set for the rising and the falling of the countries. Those nations of Europe that cast in their lot with her at the period of the Reformation feel that their destinies are, to this day, mysteriously linked with hers; and even those countries which so far parted company with her—such as our own and other Protestant lands—share to some extent the ebb and flow of her fortunes. Her glory can no longer dazzle, her power can no longer subjugate, but the spell of that mysterious land is still upon the countries around her. It is from Italy that the storms which at this hour threaten Europe are seen to proceed. It is the Italian question that perplexes monarchs and agitates nations.

Let us offer a word in explanation. Italy is the meeting-place of earth's idolatries. Here is the greatest system of error now on the earth—the most subtle in its adaptation to the human heart, the most specious in its assumption of Christianity, and the most skilful in its intertwinings with society and human life. Here is a system that combines in itself whatever is peculiar to, or of greatest power in, the other systems—the infidelity of the North, the sensuous mysticism of the East, and the fetichism of the South. Where is there another system that possesses such a literature as Romanism does—the product of unnumbered intellects, which have spent their energies in rearing a defence around it? Where is there a system

that has such an organisation at its service—so perfect and so far-reaching? Where is there another system so propped up by political power?—for Romanism still sits enthroned upon the principalities and powers of earth. Where is there another system that possesses all these, or any one of them, in such measure as the Papacy does? Here it is that the world's battle must be fought. Here stands the great hindrance to the world's conversion. That hindrance must be taken out of the way before the light of truth can shine down upon the universal earth. When falls the Papacy, the minor idolatries of the world must fall. The great voice will be heard, as of old, sounding amid the groves and temples of heathendom, and proclaiming, "Great Pan is dead." The oracles of the nations will become dumb; and triumphant voices will be heard saying, "Now is come salvation; and the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ."

There is therefore no more important question at the present hour than this, What progress is Italy making towards her emancipation from the yoke of the Papacy? To this question we proceed to give a reply.

CHAPTER III.

GENERAL ASPECTS OF ITALY'S AWAKENING.

It is told of the great painter Parrhasius that he once undertook to put on canvas a symbolic picture of the democracy of Athens. The attempt was only partially successful. It could scarce be otherwise, for what the daring artist had engaged to do was nothing less than to portray chaos. He who undertakes to describe the Italy of the present hour, undertakes a task of like difficulty—he attempts to paint chaos.

The nation is at present in a state of dissolution. The old ties are all but disrupted, and the new ones have not yet grown. There is no common faith in the country. True, the people are all Catholics, or style themselves so; but then every man believes as much or as little of Catholicism as suits him. One man receives as infallible every jot and tittle of what pope and cardinals teach, another receives their doctrine *cum grano*, the exception having reference, it may be, to the better half of the whole. One man receives the sacrament because he believes it imparts grace, another goes to communion because it will do him no harm:—it is a rite of Catholicism, and although the particular rite may be false, Catholicism as a whole is true, and will, in some way or other, take him to paradise. One man believes in this saint, wears his medal, swears by him,

and keeps his *fiesta* with noisy and riotous jollity; another reserves his homage for that other saint, and in token of devotion honours the birthday of his patron by appearing with demure look, with beard untrimmed, with face unwashed, and body mortified by fasting and flagellation. One man sees in the church-legends the records of veritable miracles; another beholds in them the proofs of pious frauds. In short, Catholicism in Italy is not a creed which is to be believed by each man in particular; it is a creed which is to be professed by the nation as a whole.

Further, there is at this hour no common action in Italy. Within certain limits, every man does what is right in his own eyes. Each man has his creed, which is very much of his own framing, the dogmas composing it being selected without much critical examination of the grounds on which they rest, or any great care as to whether they will hang together; and as every man has his special creed, so every man has his special practice. He obeys the church when the humour takes him, and he finds it easy to obey; but when interest or passion pull strongly the other way, he makes just as little scruple about disobeying. At most it is an affair of a few pauls, or an hour or two more or less of penance. He holds himself all the while an obedient son of the church. One man would not touch a morsel of animal food on Friday; another on that day sits down to a banquet. One man would not buy a lottery-ticket till first he has made his vows to Mary, and offered her a share in his winnings; another takes the whole luck of the adventure upon himself. And as in this land of Catholic unity every man fashions and squares his creed to his own taste, or

his own convenience, so there are a good many who have no creed at all. Not that they are the enemies of the church, or would assail her dogmas, for the church is a great institution, which the country could not very well do without; but although they themselves have no particular need of a creed, the majority of men, say they, are much the better for having one: they might become ungovernable did not this bond restrain them; and if the cord but hold, it matters little whether the dogmas of which it is composed be true or false.

It tends further to increase the dissolution of this land that no one man has risen up to rally the nation round him. Where is the man with intellect sufficiently powerful and with soul sufficiently large to thrill the Italians with his voice, and calling them out of the slough of petty intrigue, of personal vice, and of sordid, selfish enjoyment, to breathe into them the unconquerable resolve of being a free and united nation? We look in vain for such a man. Upon most of the public men of Italy there is a blight—a blight of cowering superstition, or of corrupting profligacy, or of narrowing greed. There is Garibaldi. He stands apart even as he dwells apart—a hero and philanthropist on the measure of ancient times, and perhaps beyond it. The dazzling conquest of Sicily and Naples he presented to his king: and he who gives is greater than he who receives. There is Ricasoli, upright, patriotic, untainted by the national venality. There is Azeglio, the unselfish lover of his country, and the old and faithful servant of his king. When we have mentioned these three names we have exhausted the list of Italy's great men. Not one of the three, however, could at this moment lead in a combined movement; and were the first, who perhaps

may be accounted the greatest among them, to attempt it, he would but succeed in plunging his country into civil war.

Moreover, Italy at this hour is a land of strange anomalies. Its whole condition is abnormal. Its sleep is past, and yet it is not awakened; it is only awakening. Full vision is not yet restored to it, and everything it sees appears inverted and distorted. One half of the nation is alive; the other half is dead—is yet in its tomb. Italy reminds us of the picture which Milton has drawn of the lion in the act of springing into life:—

“Now half appeared
The tawny lion, pawing to get free
His hinder parts; then springs as broke from bonds,
And, rampant, shakes his brinded mane.”

So with Italy. The head and upper parts of the nation are risen, but the lower extremities stick fast in the mire, and hard indeed will be the task of extricating them from the ignorance and barbarism of ages.

To herself Italy is, and must be, an enigma. Newly awakened from long sleep, failing to comprehend the new world into which she has been ushered, and the relations in which she stands to it, she finds on every hand anomalies that perplex her. She has brought back with her from the grave the dream of old dominion. But how reconcile this with the fact that, so far from being mistress of the world, she is not mistress on her own soil? She is or was the mother of arts; why then is she under the necessity of inviting the stranger to teach her to weave, to plant, to guide the wheel, and to ply the forge? Her factories are superintended, her railroads are laid down, her ships are

built, her cannon are bored, by foreign skill, mainly by that of British artisans. Why has her right hand forgot its cunning? Her dwelling is in the fatness of the earth, her land is a land of corn and wine; why then are so many of her children in want of bread? Why, amid her noble valleys, her vineyards and her olive-woods, do we meet so many spectacles of misery and poverty? Why is this Eden of hers, whose skies are so fair, whose air is so balmy, and whose scenery is so grand, haunted by so many human beings pale, emaciated, sickly, and whose sunken cheeks and hollow eyes proclaim that they are pinched by hunger and worn down by toil? Whence springs the contrast betwixt the physical beauty of this land and the horrors that darken it? There is a cause, and it is not far to seek. But has Italy divined it? Not as yet. She can but gaze upon herself and wonder. A visage so noble, yet so disfigured by deep scars, so soiled and darkened by the dust of the grave!

We must point out one other anomaly which cannot but startle and perplex half-awakened Italy, and that is her relation to the "Faith." She has been styled the land of faith; and among her glories she has ever reckoned it one of the brightest that she is the seat of him who is the head of Christendom. It was now, if ever, that this faith should have shown that it had in it a restorative virtue. It should have been the angel to descend and raise Italy from her sepulchre. Instead of this, it is the evil genius which presses down her coffin lid. This cannot but appear to her marvellous and inexplicable.

And then her relations to the church and its head, how strange; and from Italy's point of view, how

inexplicable ! A regenerated land, bright with intelligence and virtue, should have been the glory of the church, the brightest jewel in the tiara of the pope. Has the Papacy so accounted it ? No : the spectacle of a rising and renovated country has afflicted the church with inconsolable grief. Sight terrible and appalling ; she has saluted it with anathema. Strange alternative it must seem to Italy : if the country go forward, the church must perish, and if the church triumph, the nation must go back to its grave ? Startled by these anomalies, Italy cannot but ask herself—Why do the arts and the faith struggle together within her who has been styled mother of both ? Why is the nation in conflict with itself ? Why does Italy fight against Italy ? Is there in all history another enigma more hard to solve ?

Foes Italy has without, but her worst foe is within. The soldiers of that foe wear neither the red trouser of the French, nor the white jacket of the Austrian ; their uniform is the black robe of the priest. Their fortresses are not stone walls, but confessional boxes ; and their weapons are neither bayonets nor cannon balls, but dogmas pointed with eternal anathema. Distracted by the conflict which she has to maintain with this foe, Italy can think of but one thing. The duality of the country, so manifest at this hour, grows out, she believes, of the dual character of the pontiff. There are two popes in Peter's chair, she imagines ; the one the foe, and the other the friend, of the country, and could she sunder the twain, she would solve the enigma, and all would be well. So she reasons. Accordingly one thought occupies her mind, namely, that of dividing the Papacy. The spiritual

pontiff she will retain, the temporal pontiff she will drive away.

Contemporaneously with this internal disintegration of the nation, this snapping of old ties, this falling away of man from man, we find certain great external bonds beginning to act upon Italy.

The country is now under one king ; and although it can scarce as yet be said to be under one code, for the provincial laws are still administered in their respective localities, it is now under one constitution. The King and the *Statuto* are two mighty bonds of union. Whatever may have been the shortcomings of Victor Emmanuel in other respects, he has stood firmly by the *Statuto*. He has been as faithful in the cabinet as he has been brave in the field. To that extent at least, he has deserved well of Italy.

The next bond is one of a purely external kind ; we refer to the enemies by which Italy is beleaguered on all sides. Of the governments around her, Austria and Spain are, or till recently were, avowedly hostile ; Russia and Prussia are doubtful. Great Britain is the one European power on whose hearty good-will Italy can fully depend. This wall of hostile steel, wherewith Italy is begirt, even more perhaps than either king or constitution, keeps the Italians united. They know right well that should they open their ranks, but for a moment, the foe will take advantage of it, and into that opening will be instantly and ruthlessly thrust the foreign bloody spear.

Last and strongest of all, as a bond of union, is Rome. That old town, so near and yet so very far off, has a strange power of dazzling the Italian imagination, and captivating the Italian heart. To that town the whole

nation is drawn as by the force of a spell. The attraction of Rome is like the silent, steady, irresistible power of gravitation. Not otherwise, we verily believe, could the desire for it be extinguished than by the extermination of the Italian race. Rome's prestige comes from the depth of past ages; time, instead of weakening, seems but to intensify it; as the town moulders and grows old a brighter halo appears to encompass it, and to the modern Italian "Rome" is a name of even greater power than it was to his fathers of two thousand years ago. This universal and over-mastering desire, will prove a main element in the settlement of the Italian question—it necessitates a solution, it will compel a solution, and it will have a principal share in giving to the country's final destinies, at whatever hour these may arrive, their form and fashion.

Meanwhile these external and material bonds hold the nation together, and may continue, perhaps, to do so, should no disaster from without befall the country, till influences of a higher and more powerful, because of a less secular kind, shall spring up within to give not union only, but unity. And therefore we may be permitted to indulge the hope, that the moral and social dissolution so manifest in Italy at this hour, is but the forerunner of a new life. The old nation must die, that a new and nobler one may come into being.

Let us glance for a moment or two below the surface of Italian life—that surface which is made up of loud talk, much newspaper discussion, much parliamentary debating, no end of church-shows and incensings of images, earnest money-seeking, much wine and coffee-drinking, and no little ostentatious infidelity, which the shallow praters mistake for freedom of con-

science—let us drop our line into the depths, not heeding the ripples on the surface, and ascertain how the tide sets far down. Here there flows a current broad and deep. What power has originated this current? and in what direction is it bearing the country?

Well, then, there is in Italy at this hour a great movement in progress—a movement which cannot be witnessed but with joy and gratitude on the part of every man who wishes well to Italy and the world. That movement we take to be really deeper and more hopeful than that which the sixteenth century inaugurated, and which, although it promised emancipation to the country, passed away and left Italy bound.

First, let us show what that movement is. Were we to ask the passing tourist wherein consists that change which is now beginning to transform Italy, he would point us to the great outstanding signs of progress which are the first to strike the eye. He would mention the almost universal hostility to the temporal government of the Papacy; the efforts now making, on a great scale, to educate the country; the suppression of the regular clergy, with their convents and monasteries; the vigorous and successful attempts to pass a bill authorising civil marriages; the rise of a free press, the growth of trade, the introduction of machinery, and all the modern facilities of which Italy was deprived under the priestly and semi-priestly governments that ruled it down to 1859; and he would point us to—most blessed sign of all—the disposition shown on the part of a few here and there throughout the country to return to the Christianity of the New Testament, and to shake off the

idolatry of the pope's spiritual rule, as well as the tyranny of his temporal government. On all of these we shall specially dwell afterwards.

But these things do not constitute the movement, they are simply its indices. They point to an influence still mightier, far down, at the foundations of society, which gives them being. The sower who appears in the fields scattering the seed is not the author of that rallying of the vital forces in the bowels of the earth which creates the spring; nor is the ship which is borne on the tide the cause of that mysterious influence that stirs the waters in the depths of the ocean. No more are the signs we have enumerated the creators of that blessed spring which is stirring in the depths of Italy—of that moral tide which is flowing in the abysses of Europe.

With regard to this movement, we must premise that it is a movement which no one in or out of Italy has originated. None of the kings of Italy, none of the statesmen of Italy, none of the writers of Italy, can claim the honour of having called it into being or given it its first impulse. Further, we may affirm, that neither king nor statesmen nor people well understand this movement, or see whither it is bearing them. And further still, we may affirm that so far as it is bearing them towards the overthrow of the Papacy, that is a result which they do not wish, which they would most sincerely deprecate, and which they all at this hour, king, statesmen, and people, are striving most strenuously to avert. The fall of the Papacy they would regard as the fall of their country. The Papacy, in their eyes, is still one of the main bulwarks of their national existence: it is the glory of their

past, the hope of their future ; and they can see nothing beyond its overthrow but anarchy and ruin. To the Italians, with their present views and feelings, the end of the Papacy would be almost the end of the world.

Their whole national action has been and at this hour still is framed with the view of preserving the Papacy. I do not say that it is accomplishing that end, but I say it is adopted for that end. The framers of the constitution, certainly, did not contemplate the abolition of the Papacy when they enacted as its fundamental article, "The catholic apostolical and Roman religion is the only religion of the States." Cavour, certainly, did not contemplate the abolition of the Papacy when he enunciated his famous maxim, "a free church in a free state." The ministers of the crown certainly did not contemplate the abolition of the Papacy when they declared, in the famous debate on the transference of the capital that they had never ceased to strive for the reconciliation of the Papacy with Italy. Azeglio, who, at a critical moment, saved the constitution from being torn up by the priesthood, does not contemplate the abolition of the Papacy. In the debate to which we have referred, he warned the nation that it must not go to Rome, but leave that city to the church. Nor does the Roman democratic club, although living under the shadow of the Vatican, and in hourly terror of falling into its dungeons, contemplate the abolition of the Papacy, seeing in their manifesto, published in the Italian newspapers October, 1864, they avow that they had as their aim "to restore to the nation unity, to the kingdom its capital, and to Italy the Papacy."

The Italians distinguish betwixt the *government* of

the pope and the *religion* of the pope, and forsaking the one they cleave to the other. Nay, they distinguish betwixt the temporal and the spiritual man. The pope as king, head of the state, they detest, and, to a man, seek to displace. The pope as priest, head of the church,—that church whose doctrines are true, and whose sacraments are efficacious,—they venerate, and will not part with. The head, the bond of union, the prime glory of the nation, so the Italians reason, would be gone, were they to lose the pope as priest.

In the efficacy of absolution, in the mystic virtue of the sacraments, in the superhuman power of the priest to save or to destroy, to consign to eternal flames or to open the gates of paradise, they are still, in the gross, firm believers; and were it not for one's faith in the sure word of prophecy, one would despair of the emancipation of Italy ever being effected, so hopelessly are its people enthralled, and so powerless are they to rend their fetters. In the ordinary course of events, centuries must pass away before their eyes can be opened. I say *in the ordinary* course of events, for we cannot tell how long events may continue to run in their ordinary course. Nearer and louder sound the footsteps of the Great Ruler in the startling evolutions of his providence, and who can tell what new and awful demonstration of the falsehood of the papal system he may have in store for the conviction of both Italy and the world? He who of old showed his "signs" and "wonders" in the "land of Ham," in token of his displeasure against that tyrannical idolatry which had oppressed his Israel, may repeat these miracles, not in the natural but in the providential sphere, at the fall of this the greatest of

all the idolatries. This would only be consonant with what has happened at all the grand turning-points of history. But apart from some such providential interposition, I know of no methods of mere human origination, nor indeed of any agencies of any kind, now in action in Italy, which, at their present rate of progress, could, in less than a very lengthened period, disperse the darkness and break the spell in which, to this hour, the Italians lie bound.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ITALY OF TO-DAY—CONFLICTS IN THE DAILY PRESS.

ITALY has the gift of beauty, but, alas ! as one of her own poets has said,* it has proved a fatal dower. Her loveliness has in every age tempted the invader ; armed hordes, scaling her snowy bulwark, have rushed upon her as rushes the tempest from the Alps. The list of conquerors, from Hannibal to Napoleon, who have swept across her plains, giving her cities to sack and her sons to slaughter, is verily a long one. But now a conflict of another kind, far higher in its principles, and destined to prove more lasting in its issues than any that has reddened its fields, is in progress in Italy. The Bible, the colporteur, the evangelist, to which we may add a free constitution and a free press, are there contending with the pope, the cardinals, the paolotti, and the brigands. They fight for the supremacy, not of Italy only, but of the world.

This war rages from north to south, from west to east, of the peninsula. We trace it not only in the debates in parliament, not only in the columns of the daily press, not only in the discussions on the piazza, but in every household, and in every heart. The deep, unbroken trust of the Italian in his church is at an end. Every day the curtain is raised a little higher,

* Vicenzio da Filicaio.

and some new and hideous feature of the papal system glares out upon his startled vision. He is not convinced as yet—he is only appalled. He recoils from the conclusion to which these discoveries point as from some shocking blasphemy for which he never could hope to obtain forgiveness. Can it be that all his fathers died in a false faith? Can it be that the church of Peter, the church of the saints and the martyrs, that church which has filled the world with her dominion and history with her glory, is, after all, not the church of Christ? Such are the suspicions that will force themselves upon his mind, but which he strives to banish, as he would the suggestions of some malignant demon. Ah! it is hard for a nation to struggle out of the darkness. To us clear as noonday is the blessed gospel. But these men view it through the mists of ages. The veil is still upon their heart. Nevertheless, that veil Providence is rending by a thousand agencies: gradually, however, lest the light being too suddenly admitted should blind the eyes it is meant to illuminate. Let us sketch this conflict in a few of its phases. Its greater features we do not at present note. The measures of government taken with the view of promoting education and industry, of uprooting the abuses of past ages, and imbuing Italy with the spirit and influences of modern times, will be afterwards described in detail. At present we confine ourselves to those minuter movements which may bring the Italy of to-day, in its social and spiritual condition, before us. Let us begin with the press, and the skirmishes which are of daily occurrence in its columns. These will show us two Italies—the Italy that is passing away, and the Italy that is rising.

The public press of Italy is but of yesterday. It had no existence a few years ago. It was the revolution of 1848, and the sword of Napoleon in 1859, which proclaimed enfranchisement to the pen in Italy. Now every party in the country has its literary organ. The ultramontanes were the last to come into the field, being much more expert at fingering their rosary than the compositor's stick. But necessity left them no alternative, and now they muster in great force. Not fewer than seven ultramontane journals were started in Florence in the summer of 1864. Both parties, lay and clerical, appeal to the Bible in their daily discussions. Thus a book which had passed into utter oblivion in Italy is coming up as from its sepulchre; and some readers are finding their way from the morning's newspaper to the colporteur's stall.

Let us give an instance. The *Temporale* of Florence is a journal which rarely permits a day to pass without a vigorous assault upon the temporal power and the abuses of the hierarchy, and, by way of reply to its vigorous logic, it has occasionally a bombshell thrown in at its office window. We find this journal addressing the codini and legitimisti thus :—" You have raised your voices to the utmost pitch in condemnation of the wickedness of the age ; you have rent the very heavens with your protestations against the violation of divine right ; and in proof thereof you appeal to the thirteenth chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans, where it is said, ' the powers that be are ordained of God.' *Benissimo*. Constitutional kings and republican presidents, being powers regularly constituted, are powers ordained of God. In France it is Napoleon III. who is to be obeyed ; in the United States of America it is

President Lincoln who is to be obeyed ; and in Italy it is your duty to submit yourselves to the law of Victor Emmanuel, as the power ordained of God. Signor Fanatico Legitimisto, you have pronounced against yourself. Monsignor Prete, you know how to quote the letter of the Bible ; its consequences you cannot divine, and into its profounder meaning you are unable to enter." *

To this there comes a rejoinder, it may be, next morning. The journalist is asked why he, a layman, dare presume to interpret Scripture, and is reminded that this belongs to those only to whom the church has given the power of perceiving its true meaning, and that he had better let alone a book which he can but wrest to his own destruction and that of his readers. This piece of advice, well meant doubtless, brings down upon the head of the luckless priest, or it may be of the whole priesthood, a still fiercer attack.

Christ said, " My kingdom is not of this world." How comes it, then, that you, his vicar, have a kingdom that is decidedly of this world ? You have a territory, a crown, an army, tax-gatherers, ambassadors. Was it Christ or Pepin who gave you this kingdom ? Do favour us with a look into your charter. Do Christ's words ever recur to your mind as you seat yourself in the prætorian camp, in the midst of your Swiss guards, and see your troops defile past ? Christ's servants did not fight ; yours go forth to slay men, although it must be confessed that of late they have won no laurels save such as they have gained over the unarmed Romans.†

* *Il Temporale di Firenze: Giornale Politico-Mora'e*, June 24th, 1864.

† See *Il Temporale*, July 19th, 1864.

To silence such pertinacious objectors the priests have recourse to the old argument that the temporal power is necessary to the independence of the spiritual office. "What an admission!" exclaim their opponents; "then are the present race of popes and bishops but cowards. Why, cannot you fulfil your mission unless you have a park of artillery behind you? Why, are you courageous only when you speak from the midst of bayonets? The first pastors went forth to proclaim the gospel in the face of axes and stakes. Why should you, their successors, shirk duty to save your dainty limbs? Did Christ say to the first evangelists, 'I send you forth as sheep among wolves; but fear not, I appoint unto each of you twelve battalions of infantry, and six squadrons of cavalry, as a body-guard. Be strong, and of a good courage?' Were the prophet of Mecca to look up, how astonished would he be to find the sword which he had thought was laid by, with his ashes, in the tomb, drawn from its scabbard by the church, and as vigorously wielded by her priests as it ever was by his Saracens. 'Verily,' would Mahomet say, addressing the pontiff, 'I recognise in you a worthy successor, and I hereby duly enfeoff you in the chair in which you sit, and no one has a better right to do so than myself, seeing that chair belonged to me, and not to Peter.'"

Turning next to the cardinals, these men of a free pen, with much obeisance, congratulate the princes of the church on their greatly improved position since the days of Peter the fisherman and Paul the tent-maker. When the latter first came to Rome, they say, it was in no gilded chariot, drawn by coal-black steeds, like those showy equipages in which their eminences take an

airing on the Pincian, or dash at thundering speed along the Corso. The apostle had a long journey on the Appian Way, and when he arrived in the Eternal City he was foot-sore and travel-soiled, and in no condition for being presented at court, or even in the palace of senator; but, perhaps, in this lay the reason why the first disciples of the gospel were restricted mostly to the humbler classes, and that "not many mighty, not many noble," were called. But all this has been put right long since; and now it is the "mighty" and the "noble," and all who have money to buy, who are invited to partake in the privileges of the church. As regards Peter, as little do we doubt that he brought his fisherman's coat with him to Rome as that he brought thither his Galilean accent. But not the less was he a great potentate, and signed all his edicts with the fisherman's ring, and was duly obeyed by all the faithful; only we have some difficulty in conceiving what the emperor was about all the while Peter was playing the sovereign at Rome. Was he asleep, or on a journey, or what? But where is the proof, say they, that Peter ever was at Rome at all? In no contemporaneous history do we find the least trace of such a fact. No; we must place Peter's journey to Rome in the same category with Aristolfo's journey to the moon.

The priests, of course, reply that these sarcasms are horrible blasphemies; and, moved by a tender concern for the welfare of their flocks, they consign, with all solemnity, their authors to the company of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. But this does not hinder the same so-called blasphemies, or it may be worse, being repeated the very next morning. And what can we expect but this monstrous growth of heresies, seeing the French have

closed the Inquisition, which saved the orthodoxy of Italy in the sixteenth century; and those racks and screws which ought at this hour to be employed for the purpose of pulling in pieces the body of the heretic for the good of his soul, are rusting idly in the dank and sunless dungeons of the Holy Office. Behold the result of putting down that most salutary institution! The whole world has gone astray! There is none righteous in it save the pontiff and one or two others. And what can he, single-handed, effect, in an age wholly given over to "the delirium of toleration," as the "encyclical" pithily terms it. Nothing is left the good Pius ix. but to sit down and sigh over the record of those halcyon days when every week Rome celebrated an *auto-da-fé*, and the smell of some burning heretic lent a grateful perfume to the breeze as it blew over the waves of the Tiber and the towers of St. Angelo.

From interpreting Scripture, the priests, when occasion offers, betake themselves to interpreting providences. Their efforts in this field have been attended with hardly more success. It is worth while, however, to give a specimen. The deaths of the wife, the brother, and other relations of Victor Emmanuel, a few years ago, were construed, as all may recollect, into tokens of the divine displeasure at the constitutional tendencies of the king. The death of Cavour was a visible judgment—so said the priests. The following, which is more recent, has in it a touch of the melodramatic:—During a recent sojourn at Fontainebleau, it happened one day that the Emperor of the French fell into the lake in the palace grounds. This did him no further harm than giving him a wetting. The priests, however, saw deeper into it. It was a warning from God to Louis

Napoleon, that if he did not mend his ways, a worse thing would befall him. "Transformations," said Signor Margotto, in *Il Solito Dito*, "such as that of Nebuchadnezzar, are not confined to Old Testament times. Louis Philippe fled from France in a little *fiacre*, and his successor may be obliged to leave it in even a more humble guise. The first Napoleon was constrained to sign his abdication in the same palace of Fontainebleau where he had kept the pope prisoner, and compelled him to abdicate. Napoleon III. has in the same palace signed decrees which are not worthy of a Christian emperor, and a loyal son of the church, much less a canon of the Lateran: and the Most High has given him a warning, that if he does not use his empire for his glory and the good of Catholicism, he may yet terminate his career of success and power at the bottom of a miry pond."

Very ingenious! excellent logic! exclaim the lay journalists; but it is logic which is as applicable to priests as to kings. Let us see how it will look when applied to the pope. A little before the accident at Fontainebleau, the pope had chanced to visit the convent of St. Agnes, at Rome. The crowd was great, the rafters, we presume, were somewhat decayed; suddenly the floor gave way, and precipitated the whole assemblage into the apartment below, with the exception of the pope and one or two others, whose chairs, fortunately, were placed on a portion of the flooring which remained firm. There, perched in their niche, like stone saints in a cathedral wall, they looked down compassionately upon the wriggling mass of monks and nuns, groaning and struggling in the gulf below, covered with dust and broken timbers.

"Now," said *Il Temporale*, "let us put in practice the lesson in logic read to us by Signor Margotto. A manifest monition does Christ tender to you his vicar. When you were a fugitive at Gaeta, the French restored you to your diocese. You entered Rome over the bodies of your slaughtered flock; you mounted to your throne on steps covered with blood; but now God tells you that if you do not repent of your wickedness, lay down the temporal power, and use your office for his glory, a worse thing will befall you than happened to the poor nuns of St. Agnes."*

We have thought it better to exhibit thus the *spirit* of the press of Italy than to dwell upon the character and number of the journals. The rapidity with which newspapers have sprung up in every part of the country since 1860 is marvellous. There is not now a city, there is scarce a third-rate town, which has not its daily journal—more commonly two, and in some cases, as Turin, Florence, and Naples, well-nigh a dozen. The Italians make the press of England their model. Their discussions are conducted with growing intelligence and excellent temper, but are more frequently than with us enlivened by raillery, or spiced by biting sarcasm. The great topic discussed is the political situation; the class most frequently attacked is the priesthood, not on the ground of their doctrines, but of their lives, or, mayhap, their political opinions. We have selected our illustrations from the ecclesiastical discussions; but in truth the question of "religion," by which we mean not the question of the pope or of the priesthood, but the question of the truth or falsehood of Catholicism, has as yet but a subordinate place assigned it in the newspaper

* *Il Temporale*, July 4th, 1864.

press of Italy. It is, however, attracting more attention every day, and will eventually absorb all other questions. The high-class magazines and reviews devoted to literature and science are unknown; but Italy has, meanwhile, what she more urgently wants, numerous low-priced sheets, whose circle of readers, already numerous, is daily widening. Their writers are educating themselves, and educating their countrymen, in the principles of political freedom. They are teaching the Italians to think—one of the lost arts under the Bourbons.

CHAPTER V.

THE ITALY OF TO-DAY—MIRACLES, PROCESSIONS,
PILGRIMAGES.

WHILE certain of the priests are fighting a losing battle in the pages of a free press, others of them are contending on ground where victory is more within their reach. It may be harder to disprove a miracle than a syllogism, and miracles are the weapons to which this party are now having recourse.

A fresh outburst of supernatural power has come just in time to confirm the wavering and confound the scoffer. There is no end of the Madonnas which have been seen to weep or to wink ; virtue has gone out of the bodies of priests ; and patients, rapidly sinking under fatal maladies, have risen from their couch. Dropsies, fevers, consumptions, have yielded to the potency of chrism or of the sacrament, although they had defied the best medical skill which Italy could furnish.

In the autumn of 1863 a black Madonna arrived in Milan for the purpose of working miracles ; and a little later, a priest, in the neighbourhood of the same city, gave out that he was able to cure diseases. "I could show a receipt," writes the English clergyman at Milan, to the author, "I could show a receipt for four francs for masses to be said to cure an old man of eighty, who had a bad cough and giddy

head." The proofs of this miraculous power are not very likely to be narrowly sifted by a superstitious and credulous people.

To certain priests, when in the act of transubstantiating the wafer, Christ has appeared, his body all covered with blood, betokening (so at least has the sign been interpreted) the terrible chastisements about to fall on apostate Italy. The Virgin has judged the crisis so important, that she has come down in person; but these appearances have generally taken place on the tops of mountains and other solitary places, where she was seen only by peasants and children. But why lengthen an enumeration of signs and prodigies which seem to be but a casting of pearls before swine? for, according to common report, these miracles have tended to strengthen rather than remove doubt, and to open rather than shut the mouth of the scoffer.

Nor do the priests leave a stone unturned at this hour, if by any means they may rouse the flagging zeal of their people. They are hoarse with singing masses; weary with swinging censers. They multiply processions, spectacles, ceremonies; and to do these affairs justice, they are well fitted, if not to enlighten the mind, to dazzle the senses, by their bravery of crucifixes, flaring tapers, bespangled vestments, flaunting banners, and grand music. Is not a church which has so just an idea of devotion, and which provides so edifying spectacles for her people, a great national blessing?

At Albaro, a suburb of Genoa, one of these processions continues to be celebrated yearly, with diminishing splendour, on the third Sabbath of August. I chanced to witness it last summer. Flags fluttered at every window, the streets were covered with fruit and con-

fectionery stalls, and crowded with the population in their holiday attire. This is religion as the Italian understands it. At four in the afternoon, the procession, having been marshalled in the church, issued forth, and marched at a slow pace, to the music of drum and flute, along the highway which leads by the Mediterranean shore to Villa Quarto. The procession was headed by two masked figures, of which all that was visible were the hands, holding enormous wax candles, and the eyes, looking out with a fiery brilliancy, at two holes in the mask. Next came, borne on high, a banner, so large that the strength of several men was required to uphold it. Immediately after the banner, walking between two priests, came a child of some seven years of age, naked, save the little hairy coat which begirt his loins, displaying a scroll with the words, "Ecce Agnus Dei." He was John the Baptist.

Next came a man, in a petticoat of white linen, a cope of purple velvet, bespangled with gold, and bearing a tall cross, on whose massy beam and ponderous transverse arms was suspended a figure of Christ, the size of life. Its features were painfully haggard, its limbs were besmeared with red paint, and altogether it formed a most revolting object. The man who carried it staggered under its weight, the big drops were rolling from his brow; but he was engaged in a work of great merit: he was "bearing the cross," and he had purchased the high distinction of doing so by the payment of some fifty francs.

An instrumental band, of forty or fifty performers, followed. Then came a second crucifix, equally heavy and equally revolting with the other, its bearer

staggering under his burden, and rivulets of sweat coursing down his cheeks. Behind came a boy, of feminine aspect, his long hair shed on his brow, and his seamless robe falling down to his feet. He represented Jesus Christ !

Still another instrumental band ; then a long line of crucifixes, the figure of the Saviour being in some cases black, in some yellow, in others white ; and now appeared a numerous following of men and women, carrying lighted candles tall as sugar-canes. They wore rich dresses of brocaded silk, purple, scarlet, and blue, with an ample embroidering of gold and silver filagree. A magnificent image of the Madonna brought up the rear ; a crowd of cherubs hovered round her, and some hundreds of wax candles burned before her, although the sun was shining brightly from a cloudless sky.

It is only through symbols like these, partly grotesque, and partly blasphemous, that Rome permits to her people any knowledge of the facts of the gospel. The supreme deity of Italy is Mary. The anniversary of her "assumption," the 15th of August, is a great national *festa*. I chanced to witness its last celebration at Genoa, and the festivities of the day, which I shall briefly describe, will help us to understand what sort of devotion it is which the Italians pay to her whom they delight to honour.

Putting on his best jacket, and trimming his hat with a few flowers of the appropriate colour, white and blue, the Italian peasant goes to church, and hears mass in the morning. Games claim him for the rest of the day. But he waits impatiently for sundown. Then it is that the *festa* is seen in all its glory. Huge bonfires blaze on the hill tops. A jewel-like splendour

bursts out on the Apennines, for now the numerous villages on their sides begin to illuminate. The steeples and campaniles, hung with variegated lamps, seem, in the calm evening air, the radiant towers of a celestial city. Cannons are fired; bells are tolled; rockets, Roman candles, and all the brilliant devices of the pyrotechnist, illumine the night-sky. The young men and women, gathering in groups in the piazza, or assembling in saloons, sing, dance, and shout. The greater the jollity, the greater the honour paid to Mary. The *festa* which one morning had seen commenced is scarcely ended when the next morning has dawned.

It never comes into the mind of the Italian to doubt the alleged *fact* on which this *festa* is founded. He believes as firmly that Mary rose from the tomb and was taken up into heaven as that Christ rose and ascended. The fiction is even more palpable to him than the fact. He never read it in the page of the New Testament, it is true; but neither has he ever read there the fact of Christ's resurrection. He takes both on the word of the church. Besides, here is a great national memorial, which can be traced upwards, he believes, through the generations of the past, to that very day when Mary rose from her sepulchre in the valley of Jehosaphat, and ascended to heaven. Does not this memorial attest the "Assumption"?

Such a blending of buffoonery and blasphemy, frauds so transparent, and spectacles so tawdry, as those we have described, must shock, we say, the good taste, if not the piety, of the Italian. But we forget that Italy is not England. Purity of æsthetic taste is now restricted to the Protestant nations; the Catholic ones

are simply sensuous. It is with the Italian as with the jaded epicure, whose palate the strongest stimulants only can gratify. The natives of southern Europe, although constitutionally more idealistic than we are, have been so materialised by Romanism, that now they can be mentally impressed only by what is bizarre. When an actor wishes to exhibit upon the stage some affair of pasteboard and tinsel, what does he do? He tones down the foot-lights. A strong illumination would but spoil his show. Italy is a stage with the foot-lights toned down. The managers have contrived to make it tolerably dark, and the processions, ceremonies, and shows with which they amuse the people, looked at through the thick gloom that shrouds the land, seem imposing indeed; whereas, were they to be shown under the broad light of day, they would provoke only derision and contempt. In the great cities the light is breaking in, and these things are beginning to be at a discount; but in the rural parts all is yet darkness, unless here and there, where the colporteur has been, and a ray has pierced the black cloud, and lies like a celestial glory upon some village or hamlet.

Let us take an instance or two. These will show how curiously mottled with light and shade is the Italy of to-day—how widely one part differs from another, and how impossible it is by any general description to depict the condition of the whole. Nowhere has there been a stronger development of the evangelisation than in Milan; and yet a short distance off, lying thick along the foot of the Alps, and piled up in dark masses in their valleys, is the old mental and spiritual fog. The scenes that may be witnessed on a *festa*-day in that part of the

country are very extraordinary indeed. A priest with beard of a week's growth says mass, the chapel is filled with goats, poultry, cheese, eggs, and cakes. When mass is ended, these various articles are brought forward, are blessed by the priest, and containing, as they now do, the fructifying germs of the priestly benediction, they are put up to auction, and sold for four times their market value. The money thus realised is devoted to the purchase of wine and cognac, and the evening is spent in revelry.

At Torricella Peligna, in the Abruzzi, the following novel expedient is had recourse to in order to raise funds wherewith to suitably celebrate the festival of St. Antony. The villagers purchase a pig; the priest comes, and having blessed it, ties a rosary round its neck. The pig is now called the pig of St. Antony, and being held to be but little inferior to the saint himself, it has the right of eating wherever it pleases, and of making good its quarters for the night in any house of the village. Its visit, in truth, is much courted by the inhabitants, seeing, as is believed, it brings luck into the household which it is pleased to honour with its presence. In fact, the peasants sometimes come to blows on the weighty point of who shall have the honour of entertaining the blessed pig. But at last comes the festival of St. Antony; and with it comes trouble to the pig. A lottery is announced, and the pig—so honoured, courted, and caressed hitherto—is *the one* prize of the lottery. The happy winner has the privilege of slaying and eating the pig of St. Antony, and in return for this high honour he is expected to furnish money for the celebration of the festival.*

* *La Nazione di Firenze*, September 15, 1864.

No farther than the middle of last September, we find a syndic, a priest, and a groom, setting out from the town of Chianciano on a pilgrimage of devotion to the famous shrine of the Madonna of Castagnaio, reminding us of the lion, the fox, and the ass, which, as John Owen tells us, once on a time went on a similar pilgrimage. On their return the worshipful triumvirate assembled their townsmen in the piazza, and favoured them with a special recital of the wondrous things they had seen on their journey. The syndic had been honoured with a very clear sight, not only of the Madonna, but of king David playing upon his harp; the priest had discreetly seen nothing; but the wonderful things veiled to the eye of the church dignitary had been openly shown to the stable boy. He had seen the Madonna in all her glory, and he had further seen the Bambino Jesu, and the crucified Jesu; for to the popular mind of Italy, there are not one, but many Christs, just as there are, not one, but many Madonnas. The inference from all this is plain enough, even, that those are very wicked persons who are suppressing the shrines and convents of the Madonna who is so condescending as to show herself to pious syndics and stable boys, and our lady of Castagnaio must be very angry at them indeed.*

The mention of king David brings to mind what the traveller Maximilian Misson tells us he saw in the cloister of the Dominicans at Alessandria. "There may be observed," says he, "the history of the marriage of this last [St. Catherine of Sienna] with Jesus Christ; and under the picture is written,—*Per privilegio particolare fu sposata da Christo alla prezenza della beata*

* *La Nazione*, September 15, 1864.

*Vergine, e di quattro santi suoi devoti.** David is there playing upon his harp to solemnise the feast.”† Misson travelled in 1687. His learned work, which is full of curious facts, is now very rare. The popish priests of our country have been digging in Misson’s book, and adducing as *facts* what he had recorded as *forgeries*.‡

The processions of the Ciociari furnish deplorable proofs of the sunken condition of Italy. Assembling from the mountains of Umbria, and the yet more distant Neapolitan territory, these devotees arrange themselves in bands, and spend weeks or months in travelling about the country, visiting the holy places. The more favoured of their resorts are the shrines of Loretto, Assisi, and the Madonna of the Angels. The three vocations of brigand, beggar, and pilgrim they conjoin in one. The alms to which their sanctity entitles them they are not slow to demand. Their dress is wildly, if not tastefully, picturesque, although it has in it but little of the “saint.” The cone-shaped Calabrian hat adorns their head; a scarlet vest envelopes their chest, relieved by their shirt sleeves, for rarely do they submit to the encumbrance of a jacket. Their lower habiliments are of skin, very tight at the knee, and of a tawny hue, to which colour exposure to the weather rapidly changes them, from their original whiteness.

* “Married by special privilege to Christ in the presence of the blessed Virgin and four of her holy companions.”

† *A New Voyage to Italy; with Curious Observations on several other Countries.* Fifth edition. London, 1739. Vol ii., part ii., p. 380.

‡ We may instance Luther’s pretended prayer appended to the MS. copy of his Bible in the Vatican library, which a priest in Berwick-on-Tweed quoted in a recent controversy with the Rev. Dr. Cairns, declining all the time to say where he found it.

Their shoes and gaiters, worn to a mass of tatters, are bound on to the foot and leg by a thong of untanned cowhide, called *ciocia* ; hence the name *ciociari* given to the wearers. Each devotee carries a pilgrim's staff, or long stick surmounted by a cross. When these pilgrims enter any town it is in regular file, each company headed by its captain, and, be it noon or be it midnight, they advance singing at the top of their voices—

“Evviva Maria,
Maria Evviva,
Evviva Maria,
E chi la creato.” *

Loretto still continues to be, as it has long been, a favourite resort of these pilgrims. Our readers are aware that here stands the very house which Mary inhabited at Nazareth, and in which the angel, when he entered to announce the conception, found her telling her beads. It was carried to Italy by angels in the pontificate of Boniface VIII., of whom it was said that “He came in like a fox, reigned like a lion, and went off like a dog.”† This pope employed angels to frighten his predecessor Celestin, and oblige him to go back to his hermitage, after he had abdicated the pope-dom ; and probably, he employed the same angels to convey the Santa Casa across the seas to Loretto. The greatest resort of devotees to this shrine is at Easter, and at the festival of the Virgin's nativity, which is solemnised in September. The pilgrims creep round the building on their bare knees, repeating *Ave Marias*, licking up the dust with their tongue, and leaving their

* “Long live Mary, and He who created her.”

† “Intravit ut vulpes, regnavit ut leo, mortuus ut canis.”

track marked with blood by the laceration of their bodies on the hard grit. In Misson's time, caravans of pilgrims were wont to set out at stated times from all the great cities of Italy, to visit this shrine,—the ladies in calashes, and the men mounted on asses. These asses, like the camel which carries the Koran in the Mecca pilgrimage, were ever afterwards accounted holy. The pilgrims of that day numbered yearly about two hundred thousand. The number is still great, but the pilgrimage now is made in more humble guise.*

Let us turn to the shrine of St. Francis of Assisi. This man lived as a beggar, died beneath a borrowed cloak, and now his monumental convent—more like a city in vastness than a single edifice—rises in palatial splendour on the brow of the mountains, to the east of Perugia. Here is the bell of St. Appollonia, whose province it is to cure toothache. The bell-rope descends to the floor, and the devotee, seizing it with his teeth, and putting forth all his muscular force, pulls away violently, till, oh! sound of joy! the tolling of the bell above him tells him that the saint has heard his prayers, and that never again will it be his miserable lot to be tormented by toothache.

In the church of the Madonna of the Angels, attached to the convent, the pilgrim is seen, on entering, to fall on his knees, and in this posture to make his way to the high altar. The more devout throw themselves flat on their face, and, partly by the violent twisting of their bodies, partly by the assistance of their knees and elbows, manage in this fashion to crawl to the further end of the church. "One poor woman," says an English lady who witnessed these performances last summer, and

* *New Voyage to Italy*, vol. i., part i., p. 342.

published an account of them in the Florence journals, "too weak to move without assistance, was dragged along from the door to the altar by two sturdy pilgrims, each holding her by an arm, the poor old creature licking up in her progress the dust and the grit of that trodden floor. I marked the line along which she had been drawn by a long streak of blood from her excoriated tongue."

St. Francis seems to have found for himself an easier road to paradise than that by which his poor devotees are obliged to travel. Upon the gate of the Barnabite church, in Alessandria, is a representation, Misson tells us, of St. Francis d'Assisi, in a fine calash, mounting full speed to heaven, like another Elijah. While the traveller was admiring the picture, a priest drew near, and accosting him, said that, "It belonged to none but to St. Francis to go to heaven in a coach."*

Fatalism and filth ever follow in the train of superstition. The philosophy of this sequence it is not difficult to understand. The devotee, accustomed to roll over upon his favourite saint all that appertains to the next world, is strongly tempted at the same time to roll over upon him also all that appertains to the present. It is the same mental habit carried into another sphere. Improvidence, thriftlessness, and sloth are the opprobrium of Italy, in only a degree less than they are that of Turkey; although we are glad to be able to say, that of late matters have begun to mend. Still the masses are dreadfully apathetic. Their practical creed is that the saints will do all for them, and that they need do nothing for themselves. Is it riches? To acquire them by industry were both tedious and toil-

* *A New Voyage to Italy*, vol. ii., part ii., p. 381.

some: the Italian knows a shorter and easier road; he multiplies his vows and offerings to his favourite saint. His patron has but to will it, and the next lottery ticket he purchases will bring him a fortune. Is it plague, or fever, or earthquake, St. Antonio or St. Gennaro will protect him from these. All ordinary precautions he therefore neglects. Why should he wash his person, or change his raiment, or cleanse his dwelling?—contagion cannot touch him, so long as he keeps on good terms with his protecting divinity. Is he sick?—why should he send for a physician? The Madonna will cure him, and if she cannot, or will not, why, is it not impiety to suppose that the physician will do so? Thus superstition effectually cuts the sinews of effort.

The stupifying and debasing influence of their beliefs was but too apparent on occasion of the visit paid by cholera, in the autumn of 1865, to Naples. No one sanitary regulation could the authorities induce the population to adopt. The saints, they said, would stand betwixt them and the scourge. Therefore, instead of admitting air and light into their houses, or of carting away the filth piled in heaps at their doors, or clearing out the water-courses, or rectifying the sewerage, they did nothing but vow candles to the Madonna, and carry the host through the streets, amid a continual ringing of bells, which, by keeping up the fright of the inhabitants, extended the ravages of the malady. When all would not do, and the plague was not stayed, they proceeded *en masse* and prostrated themselves before the statue of San Gennaro. And had not the saint, in times past, done greater things than save them from cholera? If Naples exists to this day, to what is this owing? To the powerful intervention of San Gen-

naro? So do the Neapolitans most surely believe. But for him their city would long ago have been burned in the fires of Vesuvius, or drowned in its lava. Did he not stay the flood of fire as it came rolling towards them? Does he not to this day stand sentinel betwixt Vesuvius and Naples? and does he not with uplifted arm restrain the fury of the mountain, and guard from harm that city which he so tenderly loves? Why then may not the Neapolitans, dwelling under the shadow of this powerful divinity, do as their fathers for generations have done—luxuriate with impunity in sloth and filth?

Thus Idolatry is twin-brother to Indolence. It converts faith into fatalism; it extinguishes energy at its source; and hence lands overspread by superstition are ever the abode of physical as of moral uncleanness.

CHAPTER VI.

PRIESTLY ASSUMPTIONS, AND THE POPULAR ESTIMATE
OF THEM.

THE popular intelligence of a country may be fairly estimated by observing the style of argument and illustration employed by its public instructors. These men, it is to be presumed, will not pitch their addresses, either very much above or very much below the capacity of their audience. They will be careful, at all events, not utterly to ruin their own credit by very extravagantly shocking the popular beliefs, or by very grossly insulting the popular understanding. If by this standard we proceed to test the Italian mind, what must we think of it? It is a darkness of which till now we were unable even to conceive.

A somewhat curious instance of priestly assumption was told the author, on the spot, by those who had the best opportunity of knowing the facts. A little while ago, the Marchese Cresi opened a Sabbath school, in a certain street in Naples, in a room which he had hired. This came—as what does not?—to the knowledge of the priests. It happened that the wife of the man who occupied the adjoining apartment fell sick, and, being apparently at the point of death, the priest was sent for to administer the last rites. “How can I bring the sacrament into such a place?” asked the priest; “a place

polluted with heresy : to bring the body of Christ into such a place were profanation enough to bring down a judgment on all concerned." "Must I then go without the sacrament?" demanded the dying woman. "You must build a wall betwixt your room and that of the heretics"—for we must explain that the one apartment opened into the other by a door—"and when by this means you have shut out the pollution, I will bring hither the host, not before." And so saying, the priest took his departure. The poor people, finding the priest inexorable, had no alternative but to send for a mason, who walled up the door betwixt the two apartments with bricks and mortar. They then sent to tell the priest that it had been done as he desired, and the church's functionary now came, and administered the last rites to the dying woman.

Here is a preacher holding forth before an admiring audience. Let us draw near : he portrays at once his own and his hearers' character. It is Father Rocco who occupies the pulpit. But who is Father Rocco? His fame has not yet travelled so far as Great Britain ; but in Naples his repute is great indeed. Father Rocco's genius is so singularly original and daring, that our northern eyes are in some danger of being blinded by its brilliancy. Father Rocco is, moreover, a great admirer and devotee of St. Joseph, "the carpenter of the confessional," as he has been termed ; and, on occasion of a recent festival of the saint, the father ascended the pulpit, to pronounce his panegyric. He expatiated mainly on the advantages of doing him honour, and wound up with the following bold flight, which *Il Temporale* sarcastically styles "Father Rocco's argument." The impiety and blasphemous familiarity

of this discourse is so shocking that we shrink from recording it in all its repulsiveness; but it is impossible to omit all reference to such things if we would give a faithful representation of the state of society in Italy.

“A brigand,” said Father Rocco, “guilty of murder, of rape, and other sins, having died, was conducted before the tribunal of God, and there condemned. No sooner did St. Joseph learn what had happened, than he rushed into the presence of the Eternal Father, and began to intercede for the brigand.

“‘It is not possible.’

“‘It is not possible! How? A man who was so greatly devoted to me: a man who always came to the priest for mass, bringing at the same time a goodly portion of his spoils: a man who punctually told his rosary in my honour: a man who—oh, yes! he must be admitted amongst us, or I myself must take my departure.’

“‘Father!’

“‘But you know,’ continued St. Joseph, ‘that by the civil law, the husband has the right of property in his wife, and I will take away the queen of heaven. And besides, the wife has power over her son, and if you do not admit my devotee into paradise, I will take away Jesus. And, consider well, with him will go all the saints, all the angels, all the martyrs, all the virgins—all will depart, and what then will you do?’

“On the instant, the Eternal Father threw open the door of paradise to the brigand.”*

In the audience of Father Rocco, there were some,

* *Il Temporale*, July 15, 1864.

doubtless, who were pained ; there were others, we dare say, who mocked ; but the vast majority of his hearers, we dare affirm, saw neither falsehood nor blasphemy in his words. How are minds to be reached which are encompassed by a darkness like this ? What argument can avail with men who have lost the faculty of thought, and who can see no difference betwixt the most monstrous errors and the plainest truths ? Some demonstration, broad and palpable, addressing itself rather to their senses than to their understandings, can alone meet their case.

And Providence, at this hour, is pursuing two grand lines of proof of exactly this sort. Light is being thrown on the inordinate avariciousness, sensuality, and hypocrisy of the priesthood ; and the Italians seeing, as in the tale, a demon where they expected to find a divinity, are constrained to ask of themselves, "Can these men be the priests of the Most High God?" The second line of demonstration consists in stripping off the mask from the system.

Signal prominence is being given to the antagonism betwixt Catholicism and civilisation—an antagonism now confessed by the "encyclical;" infallibility having spoken the truth at last. Can a system, say the Italians, which plants a *non possumus* in the path of all progress, which would stereotype human society, be of God ? The Italians are not able as yet to answer in the negative ; but their doubts grow from one hour to another, and at no distant day the nation will proclaim, as one man, "No ; this system is not divine : this cannot be religion." Thus does Providence dispel the thick cloud. Only great and strong beams like these could pierce a gloom so dense as that which enwraps Italy.

Let us give an example under the first head ; the second will come up for illustration when we arrive at Rome. Ever and anon, startling and shocking the public taste, some monstrous disorder in convent or ecclesiastical seminary, comes to light. Since 1860 scarce a month has passed without its scandal. These deeds of shame are not of more frequent occurrence now than aforetime ; but what in other days dared not be mentioned except with bated breath, now is—thanks to a free press and open tribunals—proclaimed upon the house-top.

Last summer the wife of a rich merchant was taken by her confessor to the Convent della Suore Grigè ; for, be it remembered, the convent is never far from the confessional-box, the two being in fact twin institutions—halves of a great whole. The husband traced his wife to her *refugio*, and brought an action at law against the priest. The priest defended himself on the ground that his penitent had fled to the convent of her own accord, moved by the pious desire of enjoying less interruptedly the benefit of his spiritual instructions. The court, instead of gratifying the parties in their devout wishes, found them guilty of a flagrant breach of that commandment which is the *sixth* in order in Roman catechisms, but in Protestant ones is the *seventh* ; and the public outside, despite the protestations of the priest, who appealed from the judgment of men to the judgment of God, who knew his motives, marked their sense of the transaction by affixing, over night, the following placard to the gates of the convent, *Casa di tolleranza—Camere da affittarsi*.

Two days after the publication of these facts in *Il Temporale* there appeared in the same journal a letter

from a citizen of Parma, which was as follows:—"I have read in your spirited and most useful journal an account which shows the uses served by confessionals and convents, and I write these few lines to say that the inscription posted upon the gate of the convent *Del Refugio e delle Suore Grigè* might be affixed to a great many similar establishments. In Parma, for example, there was a convent of the Jesuits near to that of the nuns of St. Ursula. The one was divided from the other by a narrow street. When, in 1859, the just indignation of the populace drove the fathers from their buildings, it was discovered that there was an underground communication betwixt the two convents, which enabled the monks and nuns to hold converse with one another without restraint. In Lombardy, and in other places, subterranean passages have been discovered in these establishments, which allowed the religious of both sexes freely to mingle in each other's society. The conversion of these commodious asylums of dubious chastity into barracks and hospitals cannot be regarded but as a great good."*

These revelations are telling upon the national sentiment; and the popular dislike, which grows from one day to another, finds expression in a variety of ways, but in none more unequivocally than in the caricatures of the print-shops. The pencil is even more free than the pen in Italy, and it has this advantage besides, that while some only can read the journals, all can understand the pictures. Every morning brings something new, and the window which contains the illustration for the day is ever to be seen with a crowd before it.

* *Il Temporale*, August 2, 1864.

Let us cite one or two examples, taken from the cathedral square in Milan.

The writer first visited Milan in 1851, when the Croat and the priest were the twin authorities in Lombardy. He visited it a second time in 1861, after the war of independence, and a third time in 1864; and on each occasion he was able to trace a new phase of the popular sentiment as indicated by the peculiarly suggestive illustrations exhibited in the piazza of the Duomo. In 1851 that piazza could be compared only to a great sermon on purgatory; for while rows of Austrian cannon, shotted, and ready to quench revolution in volleys of murderous grape, occupied its pavement, its walls were covered with hundreds of pamphlets on church subjects, each with its illustrative woodcut, humble in art, but sound in theology doubtless, seeing it was exhibited at the very doors of the cathedral, and bore the church's imprimatur in the words "*Cum privilegio*." The prints set forth with all plainness the torments which wait on all despisers of mother church in the other world. Black creatures, with horns and tails and stings, were carrying off the souls of such as had died without the sacrament; while in the distance other souls were seen enduring sore anguish amid sweltering flames, glowing gridirons, and caldrons of boiling lead. There were other things in these prints dreadful to behold, but, doubtless, kindly meant as a preservative against that heresy which brings those who embrace it to so fearful an end.

In the interval betwixt the author's first visit and his subsequent ones, the battle of Solferino had been fought, and all was changed in the piazza of the Duomo of

Milan. The Croats were gone ; the cannon were gone ; the pamphlets on purgatory were gone—all had disappeared ; not so much as a single Croat or a single pamphlet remained. But this was not all ; the tables had been turned on the priesthood. A new crop of pamphlets had come up to take the place of their predecessors, but how different in their subject-matter ! These latter lashed, lampooned, and satirised that very hierarchy at the portals of whose high temple they were openly displayed ; and although the priests were coming and going all day long, not a finger dared they lift to tear down even one of the peccant prints.

Out of a multitude of examples, let us select one or two. Here is a monk who has been made the subject of a very curious experiment, with the view of ascertaining on what he had been feeding these eight days past. The priest had been cut open from the throat downwards. Hung round the interior of his stomach were sirloins of beef, jigots of mutton, cuts of veal, slices of venison, fowls of various wing, and river and sea-fish, with a little confectionery thrown in by way of dessert. One felt as if looking in upon a butcher's or poulterer's shop—or upon both in one. And then there was a little crowd of famished people, who seemed as if they had not eaten a decent meal for a week, gazing with intense interest at the good things in the monk's stomach, and saying, " Ah ! if we could but get in, what a capital dinner we should make ! "

There were prints, too, with a decidedly political meaning, although all pointed to the priesthood. Of these we may take the following as a specimen. A chariot is seen upon a very rough road. The horses are

plunging and rearing at a great rate, and the chariot is tossing and reeling in a way that threatens every moment to end in an overturn. The vehicle is marked *Italia unita* but the moral lies in the obstacles over which it is being so uncomfortably and perilously dragged. These are crosiers, mitres, tiaras, etc., in such numbers and size as to render the road rough indeed, and all but impassable. In other cases the same chariot is seen proceeding along a smooth and even path, at a rate which promises speedily to bring it to its destination. That destination is sufficiently indicated by an antique portal, in the distance, marked *Roma*. But as the chariot is rolling onward, it is suddenly brought up by a strong iron chain stretched across the road, and held at the one end by a zouave and at the other by a priest.

Other caricatures in the same piazza gave representations of the seven deadly sins, in each of which the vice or crime was embodied in the person of a monk or nun. These are by no means doubtful indications of the estimation in which the Italians, who ought to know them best, hold their priests.

Not prints only, but numerous pamphlets, are appearing at this hour abounding in that keen irony and mocking sarcasm of which the Italians are such perfect masters. We instance but one of these, "*Pius ix. condemned at the tribunal of Christ.*"* According to this *brochure*, the report carried to heaven of the state of the court of the Vatican was so bad that it was resolved to call Pius ix. and his two ministers, Antonelli and De Merode, to a reckoning. Accordingly, the angel Gabriel was despatched to earth with a

* *Pio IX. condannato dal Tribunale di Christo.* Naples, 1862.

summons to the alleged culprits. They made their appearance in due course in paradise, and were arraigned at the bar. Christ sat as judge, and the apostles and saints were the jury. The pontiff and his ministers were found guilty of the crimes laid to their charge; but being asked to give proof of repentance by laying aside the temporal power, all three, with characteristic obstinacy, replied, *Non possumus*, whereupon they were sentenced to be sent back to earth for one year more, and if, within that time, they did not mend their courses, and relinquish the temporal sovereignty, condign punishment would without fail be executed upon them.

But how came it, asks the reader, that three so important personages were not missed from Rome while attending the assize in paradise? Who transacted the necessary business of the state in their absence? In this lay the severest part of the satire. Three spirits from the "inferno" personated the pontiff and his two ministers, by entering into their bodies. The soul of Boniface VIII. took possession of the body of Pius IX.; Cain entered into that of Antonelli; and De Merode was possessed by Caiaphas. Thus no one in Rome, or out of it, ever once suspected the absence of the pope and his two ministers. There they were, going out and coming in, eating, drinking, and sleeping, giving audiences, and signing edicts as if they had actually been present. Nay, even the negotiations with France were not for a moment interrupted. But little did Louis Napoleon and the King of Italy dream with whom they were exchanging notes. They were negotiating for the surrender of Rome, as they believed, with Pio Nono, Antonelli, and De Merode, but in

reality they were transacting business with a yet more redoubtable triumvirate — Boniface VIII., Cain, and Caiaphas!

But of the hundreds of caricatures which we saw in Italy none so impressed us as a little card which we were shown at Naples. It expressed with antithetical conciseness and power a great truth. In two sentences, the respective genius of the gospel and that of the papacy was comprehensively and vividly hit off. The card was divided into two compartments. In the one compartment was a representation of Christ on the cross, his head encircled with the wreath of thorns; in the other was Pius IX. on the throne, adorned by the triple crown. Underneath Him who wore the thorny crown were the words, "God made himself a man that he might save men." Underneath the wearer of the tiara was written, "A man made himself God that he might destroy men."

Pasquin is an ancient institution at Rome. An invisible Radamanthus, he erected his tribunal in the midst of society, and fearlessly summoned before it personages of every degree, and opinions and manners of all sorts. His decisions were often severe, sometimes sarcastic, sometimes witty, occasionally quaint, but commonly just. Seldom did he fail to hit the mark. The Romans listened to Pasquin, and bowed more profoundly to the oracle of the pillar than even to the oracle of the Vatican. The former was generally accounted the more infallible of the two. After a long silence Pasquin has again spoken. Let us hear him on the present state of things in Italy. The following appeared recently upon the famous column.

"The pope wields the two powers.
 The soldier defends all the two.
 The citizen pays for all the three.
 The labourer toils for all the four.
 The priest eats for all the five.
 The doctor kills all the six.
 The thief robs all the seven.
 The confessor absolves all the eight.
 The grave-digger buries all the nine.
 Diabolus carries off all the ten." *

But in truth, with all these explanations, it is hardly possible for an English reader adequately to conceive of the state of the Italian mind at this hour with reference to the priesthood. The fact is, that the Italian sees in every priest two beings—the one a man, the other a god. The man may be a reprobate, but the wickedness of the man does not pollute the priest or invalidate the sacraments which it is his office to administer. His hands may be red with murder, or foul with lust, he is not the less a priest; and in virtue of being so, can save or destroy his devotee. So does the poor ignorant Italian believe. His homage is not that of respect, much less is it that of love; it is that of terror. It can be compared only to the homage which the ancient pagans rendered to their demons, or to that paid by our own ancestors to the demons and fairies of a bygone age, in the belief that these imaginary beings had it in their power to do them signal service or signal mischief, according as they stood affected towards them. Such is the spiritual chain which still fetters the soul of Italy. In the words of De Boni, "L'anima nostra e' sempre prigioniera nel Vaticano." †

* *Il Temporale*, May 12, 1864.

† "Our soul is still a prisoner in the Vatican."—*La Chiesa Romana e l'Italia*, p. xix.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ITALY OF TO-DAY—ITS THREE ECCLESIASTICAL
PARTIES.

THE religious question divides Italy at this hour into three parties. The first party consists of those who look at church reform from an exterior and political stand-point. The second are those who view it from an inner and ecclesiastical ground. The third are the *Evangelici*. We shall pass in brief review each of these parties.

The flag around which the first rally is that which has blazoned upon it Cavour's maxim, "A free church in a free state." This party aims simply at a separation betwixt the ecclesiastical and civil jurisdictions. Nothing more, they believe, is needed to complete the liberty of both powers. The hierarchy are to surrender their privileges and exemptions, so far as these may give them right or pretext to interfere in things civil; and the state in return is to guarantee to the church the absolute and independent exercise of her own authority. No change does this party seek to effect within the church. No reform in doctrine or discipline do they seek. In these respects the church must be guarded from all innovating and desecrating touch. She is to be parted from the state—the spiritual is to be set free from its vile subjection to the temporal, and

this change alone is to bring to both church and state a new era of liberty and prosperity.

The second party agree so far with the first that they demand of the pope, as a first and essential point, the surrender of the temporal power; and, as to ulterior reforms, they are prepared to support a separation of a certain kind betwixt the ecclesiastical and temporal authorities, and a reform to some extent in the church's discipline. Withdrawn from the engrossing influence of politics, and freed from the agitation of earthly passions, the church, say they, would instantly recover her purity and dignity, and win back the respect and love of the faithful. But the pope, they argue, must remain the spiritual head of Christendom. His power, however, they would make more nominal or more diffusive than at present. For the pope, in whose hands, as is well known, is now centred all jurisdiction and rule, this party would substitute the "church," or, more strictly speaking, a "council," as the supreme judge in things ecclesiastical. But they would permit no reform in the "faith." A little more latitude would they grant in "opinions," but in "dogmas," that is, matters which have been defined by the church, they would suffer no meddling—these must go down to the latest age untouched and unpolluted as they flowed from the font of infallibility. It is the clergy's sole and inalienable prerogative to judge of truth, and it is the people's indisputable duty to believe and obey. So does this party compendiously classify all rights and all duties on both sides. They leave the one still in possession of irresponsible infallibility, and they preach to the other the doctrine of unquestioning submission.

But while, in the judgment of this party, the "authority" and the "faith" of the church remain in their state of pristine purity, and must be preserved intact, it is not so, they grant, as regards the church's "administration." There, many abuses have crept in, and these they would willingly correct. The bishops and higher dignitaries, they say, have become oppressive. They have robbed the lower clergy of their rights. Well-nigh the whole of the revenues of the church, and all its power, have they monopolised. A redistribution of both is loudly called for. We would, say they, give back to the parochial clergy the liberties and rights of which they have been despoiled; we would make their incomes more adequate; we would give them a voice in the government of the church; we would permit them to marry; and, as the consequence of these reforms, we should expect a purer clergy, a more vigorous church, and a readier obedience from the world. This party is found mostly among the clergy; the other is mainly, though not exclusively, confined to politicians.

Of the third party it is unnecessary to speak at present, seeing they will come fully under our notice afterwards. They call themselves the Evangelical Church of Italy. They seek, by removing what they term, the "pagan usages," the "scholastic dogmas," and the "idolatrous ceremonies," which are the fatal heritage of the past, and by instituting a reform in doctrine, in worship, and in discipline, to annihilate the antagonism, of which the Italians begin to be so conscious, betwixt Catholicism and civilisation.

Here an important question arises, Which of these three parties responds most completely to the neces-

sities of the country? This is the question which now begins to be anxiously discussed by all the more thoughtful minds in Italy. Nor is this to the Italians a mere speculative point; it is one on which hangs the life or death of their country. If they shall solve this question they will establish order and consolidate their liberties; but if, on the contrary, their efforts for a reconciliation betwixt "religion" and progress shall fail, all that they have already achieved may yet be swept away. The unyielding attitude of Rome, and the opposition which the Italians have encountered from the church on all points of their political and social reform, have helped, above all things, to raise this question of antagonism betwixt the country's religious faith, and its political and social progress. Hitherto this problem has baffled all attempts at solution. The longer the Italians ponder over it the more inextricable does it become; still they are necessitated to continue their efforts: they must seek till they find; for to give up a solution would be to give up progress; and to stop would be to perish. "Behind us," once exclaimed the minister, La Marmora, "is the abyss."

Until 1860 the Italians were wholly occupied with the political question. If, said they, we can establish the *Statuto*, all will be well. The *Statuto* was established, and the political question settled more speedily than the most sanguine among them had dared to hope. Still their liberties were incomplete; still their nation was a house divided against itself. What now stops the way? they asked. Why does revolution still smoulder beneath us, and why does the sword of war still hang suspended over us? It was now that the truth first dawned upon them that there was a mightier

obstacle than any mere political one in their path. That obstacle had the art of disguising its true character under a spiritual aspect ; nevertheless it made its power effectually felt. Soon the Italians came to be of one mind, that this hindrance was none other than the church. Why this antagonism, they next asked, betwixt religion and progress ? Is it inherent in religion, or does it grow out of some vicious ecclesiastical system ?

We cannot better set the actual state of public sentiment in Italy at this hour before the reader than by a brief enumeration of the various expedients which have been proposed to solve what at this day is Italy's grand problem—the removal of this antagonism, and the reconciliation of Catholicism with civilisation.

In *La Perseveranza* of Milan, this question was discussed in the summer of 1864 with great intelligence.* The writer first passed in review the party who have for their motto, "A free church in a free state." Could the state, he asked, permit the church to define the limits of her own powers ? That would be for the state to abandon its functions, and return to the dark ages. The state, he argued, must itself define its own limits. It finds that it has certain interests and rights in matters not exclusively secular, as church property, religious corporations, the power of bishops and the parochial clergy, universities and schools, baptismal registers, marriages, and burials. These rights the state is entitled to assert by its own laws, and to recover by force, should they happen to be taken from it. Only when the state has recovered all these rights can it be called free as regards the church.

But the church claims to exercise an exclusive

* See *La Perseveranza di Milano*, June and July, 1864.

control over all the matters now enumerated. The church denies the power of the state to abolish the religious orders, to appropriate ecclesiastical domains, to enact civil marriage, to frame a national system of education, and to do other things which at this moment it is actually doing. Thus the state understands one thing by liberty and the church understands another. When you say "A free church in a free state," which of the two liberties do you mean? is it liberty in the meaning of the state, or liberty in the meaning of the church? The two are contrary. If the state is free the church is bound, and if the church is free the state is bound.* These few words touch the whole difficulty of the question.

The writer of the article in the *Perseveranza*, therefore, concludes that the formula, "A free church in a free state," is destined to remain a dead letter, unless the church herself shall have undergone an essential change.†

So, too, reasons De Boni, in his eloquent *brochure*, "The Roman Church and Italy." "Incredible to be told," says he, "we sport with the honour, the life, the future of our country under the formula, 'A free church in a free state.' It is repeated on every occasion, but each takes it in his own sense. . . . It is

* How strikingly the justice of these views has since been demonstrated by the pope's encyclical we need not say. The "encyclical" is the church. It is an exposition *ex cathedra*, and therefore infallible of the sphere within which the church claims the right to exercise authority. Suppose the church, as defined by the "encyclical," were to be guaranteed in absolute independence, what liberty would possibly remain to the state?

† *La Questione Religiose in Italia di Aristide Gabelli*. Milan, 1864.

vaunted as a maxim in which there lies wrapped up the salvation of the country. This is not quite so evident. One of the two must contain the other; or there must be an absolute separation betwixt them. The church must conquer the state, or the state must make the church completely subordinate, or state and church must live in a complete divorce, and flow in channels as far apart as those of two rivers, which empty themselves into different oceans." * And after enlarging on the dogmas of that church, and the methods she adopts to compel belief of these, and the miseries she has brought on Italy, "enough to make the stones cry out," he concludes, "After all this, is it necessary to repeat that the maxim, 'A free church in a free state,' is, for Italy, an impossibility? The phrase is simply equivalent to this other, 'A church free to attack the free state.' " †

We turn now to the second party, who add to the project of separation, in the sense explained, betwixt church and state, their pet scheme of ecclesiastical reform, which is truly a limited one. This party occupy an intermediate position. The church repudiates them as innovators, the laity despise them as behind their age. Their scheme of reform would abate a few of the grosser scandals of the Papacy, but it would leave the principle out of which these scandals grow to sprout again, and smother the state at no distant period. To hear this party declaiming on the temporal Papacy one would take them to be wholly with the Evangelicals; to hear them defending the spiritual Papacy one would take them to be wholly with the Ultramontanes. Some

* *La Chiesa Romana e l'Italia, per F. De Boni.* Milan, 1863, p. 5.

† *Ibid.*, p. 68.

British Christians, hearing them, perhaps, on only one side of this question, have been misled as regards their views, and have credited them with a measure of enlightened scriptural reform which they are very far from wishing to carry out. The ground they occupy, as it appears to us and to the writer above quoted, is not very consistent or logical. If the church be infallible, as they maintain, then they go too far; but if she be not infallible, which they practically grant when they say that she has become tyrannical in government and corrupt in practice, then they do not go nearly far enough. The progress of events will drive them from the position which they occupy at this hour. Some few will go forward into the light, others will fall back into the bosom of that church of which the priest-king is the head. But the idea that there is a large party among the priests in favour of a church reform in the Scripture sense is a mistake. No influential party exists at this hour, whatever may be the case a year hence. We who see the light so clearly have some difficulty in comprehending the position of men around whom there still hangs the darkness of ages.

As an example of the class we speak of, let us take Filippo Perfetti, formerly secretary of Cardinal Marini, librarian of the university of Rome, and now professor of Italian literature in the university of Perugia. Perfetti is acknowledged to be one of the more advanced of the ecclesiastical reformers of Italy, and, better still, a true disciple of the Lord Jesus. Let us hear him on the subject of the temporal Papacy. "Papal Rome," says he, in his "New Conditions of the Papacy" "is a more abnormal fact, and by consequence a more

impious fact than Islam." * Again, he says, "the throne of the pope will fall to-day or to-morrow; the sooner the better: the better for the good of Italy and the character of the Papacy." "The people," he continues, "have not been able to see what a jewel the gospel is, because it was set in a metal too base, the same of which their chains were made."† And speaking of the priests in his more recent work, "The Clergy and Society," he says that they have ceased to make converts, and touchingly relates his own experience in these words: "I have asked of all those Christians to whom that which is seen and felt was but as a shadow, those Christians who felt, in the life that decays, the inner life that endures, the way by which they were brought to Jesus Christ and to peace. Some have indicated to me the Bible, some have spoken to me of the traditions contained in the writings of the Fathers, some have pointed me to the heaven above, some have answered, like the mystic in his simplicity, *Via crucis, via lucis*, but hardly one has pointed me to the priest."‡

Here is a man, one would think, who is prepared to break with the pope—nay, who has already broken with him. His party, say we, will speedily follow him, and throwing off for ever the authority of Peter's chair, both leader and followers will give themselves, heart and hand, to the work of erecting, in their native Italy, a free and independent church, owning no head but

* *Delle Nuovi Condizioni del Papato, considerazioni del' Ab. Filippo Perfetti, già segretario del Cardinal Marini.* Florence, 1862.

† *Ibid.*, pp. 13, 16.

‡ *Il Clero e la Società ossia della Riforma della Chiesa, per Filippo Perfetti*, p. 18.

Christ, and recognising no infallible standard but the Bible. But alas ! no. This glorious temple, the hands of Perfetti and his party, are, we fear, not destined to rear. They simply contemplate the removing of one or two clumsy buttresses from the old edifice, but the edifice itself they want to preserve. They still bow humbly before the spiritual throne of the pontiff. "The pope," says Perfetti, in the work already referred to, "is not a subject of the king of Italy, or of any king or emperor. The pope has an office which has been committed to him by God, and which is not derived from man." "The pope is free and independent, not by the laws of the state, or in virtue of any convention, but by the recognition of his own divine right." He thence infers that "no political government can circumscribe or intervene in the action of the pope, or control his relations with the Catholic world."* He next proceeds to weigh Protestantism and Catholicism in his balance, and finds that the immense superiority belongs to the latter. "On that account," says he, that is, on account of its subjectivity, "Protestantism is inferior, immeasurably inferior to Catholicism. Protestantism cannot absorb Catholicism, because it is not organic ; Catholicism being divinely organic, is able to absorb Protestantism, which in its essence is too spiritual and mystical ; Catholicism is the man and the church ; the man in the church, and the church in the man ; that is to say, the man in union to Christ, and in communion with the saints, and Christ manifested in him."†

Such are the views of this party. It halts betwixt Rome and the Evangel. Italy is not convinced that

* *Delle Nuovi Condizioni del Papato*, p. 26.

† *Ibid.* p. 20.

this party has solved her problem. If the old Catholicism is found to be in antagonism with civilisation, the more enlightened Italians, with reason, doubt whether the new would be more in harmony with it. Let De Boni, in his work "The Inquisition ; or, the Calabrian Waldenses," speak for all : " We must adapt our arms to the character and strength of the enemy. The church has confiscated Italy in the name of God ; chaining our country to her own altars : and we shall not be able to break either the country's chains or our own without overturning those altars, which are based on the cupidity of a caste and the ignorance of the people. . . . The church of Rome is immortal rebellion, pitching her tent, in God's name, in Italy, and it is impossible to escape the dilemma. Italy or the church must perish."

Thus, like all middle parties, the Neo-Catholics are exposed to a cross fire. The church which they have left attacks them, and the state but feebly defends them. They count but for little in the popular movement. They neither possess that clearness of view, nor have their measures that comprehensiveness of breadth, nor their action that energy and boldness, which are essential to evoke the sympathy and command the confidence of the nation.

Of the third party, the *Evangelici*, to wit, we shall speak fully at a subsequent stage. Let it suffice, meanwhile, to say that their proposition is a compendious and radical one. They would abolish the Catholicism of the middle ages, and replace it with the Catholicism of the first age. In this alone is to be found, they believe, the principle of a reconciliation, at once complete and permanent, betwixt religion and progress, Christianity and civilisation.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PAOLOTTI.

OUR sketch of Italian parties would be incomplete did it fail to include the Paolotti. "Who are the Paolotti?" our readers ask. They are, unhappily, but too well known in Italy, where, though the sound of their footsteps is nowhere heard, their presence is everywhere felt. The Paolotti—in other words, the members of the order of St. Vincent de Paul—are the Jesuits of our age.

The name "Jesuit" had become a word of terror in Italy as well as in the rest of Europe. It called up before the mind the image of a malignant power, dwelling in thickest darkness, hearing with its ear all that was said, and seeing with its eye all that was done.

To have retained a name which had become so odious—which was suggestive only of what was dark and sinister—while work of a certain kind had to be done in Italy, would have been as preposterous as for an enemy to light his signal fires and beat his drums when he meditated a night attack. Accordingly the name was discarded. But if the word has been dropped, the thing has been retained. "The order of Jesus, and the order of St. Vincent de Paul," said a Turinese journal lately, "have come out of two separate eggs, but one mother has sat on both—the Roman curia." "In every

Paolotto," observed another, "we behold a Jesuit. The wolf has lost his skin; he has not lost his teeth or dropped his visor."

The Jesuits and the Paolotti differ in name, but in all else they are the same. They are the same in their moral principles, and they are the same in their political aims. That "the end justifies the means" is the maxim of both—a code of unrivalled conciseness and of equally unrivalled convenience. It raises no perplexing questions touching the violation of oaths; and it finds no sin in acts of perjury or deeds of blood. There is but one society for which all others exist—the church. Her welfare is ever the first consideration, and whatever is done for that end is by that end sanctified. Crime becomes virtue, and the world's desolators are transformed into its greatest benefactors. Such were the ethics of the Jesuits, and such, the journals of Turin and Florence assure us, are the ethics of the Paolotti. Opportunity only do the Paolotti lack to show that they have drunk as deeply into the spirit of this famous maxim as their predecessors, and they are prepared equally with them to apply it with unshrinking vigour in the way of rectifying whatever they deem erroneous in the opinions or noxious in the institutions of the present age.

Marvellously and astoundingly rapid has been the growth of the Paolotti in Italy. In a single night, we might say, have they shot up, like the prophet's gourd, into portentous stature; and their shadow now begins to darken all betwixt the snows of the Alps and the fires of Etna. Just as the Reformation called the Jesuits into existence, so the present awakening in Italy has brought the Paolotti upon the scene, and for a like

purpose. Their work is to trample out every spark of mental independence and spiritual light that begins to exist in the peninsula, and to present Italy, once more blindfold and fettered, at the foot of the throne of the pope and the shrine of the Madonna. To accomplish this end they have two simple and efficacious plans; the first is to put down the *Statuto*, the second is to restore the Bourbon.

But how, the reader asks, was it possible to call into existence so vast a confederation in so short a time? The membership of the Paolotti, according to all accounts, is extremely numerous, their organisation is perfect: and yet all has been the creation of a few short years. Unhappily, the task of extemporising such a society was but too easy. The materials for its construction were but too plentiful in Italy. The diplomacy of Cavour and the sword of Garibaldi could create a united kingdom, but they could not create a united sentiment in the peninsula. The old ignorance, prejudices, and parties remained—they could not be summarily chased out of the country like the dynasties. Those who reflect upon the factions which distracted England for so many years after our own Revolution will not be surprised to be told that Italy at this hour is even more divided by party interests and more inflamed by party strivings. There are, first of all, the old and well-known parties of the Codini and Sanfedisti. These are composed of the high Catholic and aristocratic families who are conservative from wealth, and still more from tradition and family connexion. They are the fast friends of the fallen dynasties, whose cause, in their eyes, misfortune has made sacred. There are next the *employes* of the former governments, many of whom eat the bread

of the present, but reserve their best wishes, and, when occasion favours, their best endeavours, for the old. Next come the pensioners of the priesthood—a numerous body, as might be expected from the decay of agriculture and the ruin of trade. Next, and not less numerous, are the fanatics among the people. Into the midst of these numerous and diverse parties was suddenly thrust the new constitution. One can fancy how it would shock prejudices, cross interests, disserve old ties, and create enemies, secret and open, on all sides. In such a state of society, Faction, like the warrior in the tale, had only to stamp with its foot, and an army rose from the ground.

Each club of the Paolotti is under the direction of a president and a secretary. The communal clubs make their report to the provincial centres, and the provincial centres to Rome. At Rome resides the head that directs the whole of these confederated societies. The ostensible object of the Paolotti is of course a religious one. They labour to succour the poor and to minister to the sick, by carrying alms to the one and consolation to the other. They are especially careful that the dying do not depart without the last rites of the church, and that the young do not grow up untaught in the wholesome lessons of the *Dottrina Christiana*.

The Paolotti know how to open all doors, and to penetrate into the most secret places. They belong to every rank of life, from the noble to the beggar. They practise every profession and every trade. They profess all shades of politics, and they wear every disguise. They are found in the bureaux of government, eating the bread of the state which they are secretly labouring

to overthrow. They swarm in the workshops, they insinuate themselves into the working men's clubs; but what delights them most is to act as tutors and schoolmasters. Their ambition is to mould the young, and rear a race in Italy that shall be worthy of the dark ages.

"In Leghorn," says *Il Temporale*, "this sect has insinuated itself in great numbers into every place. We do not speak of the offices of government, where they may be seen lounging in their easy chairs reading the *Armonia* and the *Campanile*; but in every establishment of public instruction, in every orphanage, in every institution of charity, and even in the associations of the operatives; in the municipal offices, and in the communal council itself, they have their agents, acting upon the immoral maxim that 'the end justifies the means,' supporting every wickedness, and by every base means attempting to enlist members and acquire power."*

"This society of St. Vincent de Paul," said Signor Siccoli, in his place in parliament last May, "enjoys the sympathy of the rich families, who abundantly aid them with money. In Tuscany, the infant asylums are under their charge. They make it their business to train servants, merchants, schoolmasters; and hardly has a vacancy taken place before the society has found a suitable member of its own to fill it. By these means a Paolotto was made President of the Bank of Tuscany; a Paolotto was made Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce at Florence; a Paolotto was named for employment in the secretaryship of the public accounts. We have Paolotti," said Signor Siccoli, in conclusion, "in this Chamber."†

* *Il Temporale*, Florence, July 12, 1864.

† *Il Temporale*, May 12, 1864.

"The Paolotto is found in the court," says the *Avvisatore Alessandrino*, "in the ministry, in the parliament; the Paolotto is found in the prefecture, on the tribunals, in the courts of appeal, in the dogana, in the barracks, in the navy, in the schools, in the lyceums, in the administration of the savings' bank, the lottery, and the hospitals. The Paolotto is found in the democratic club, in the operative association, in short, he is everywhere. This race of chameleon-jesuits conspire in secret, and sow, by the deadly talk of their mouths, the seeds of a clerical and Bourbonic reaction. Do you demand a proof? Wherever reaction has taken place in Italy, there first has come the Paolotto. This powerful body, with its numerous affiliated branches, is spread, not only over all Italy, but over all Europe." *

"This wolf in sheep's clothing," says *Domenico Bomba di Roma*, "is committing great ravages on the coast of Liguria. The order of St. Vincent de Paul has two associations in Genoa, whose operations ramify through affiliated clubs, over the whole seaboard on both sides of the city. The traveller who visits the Riviera on the working days, is struck with admiration at the rising trade and teeming populations of the numerous towns which line the shore; but let him revisit these places on a festa, and he will be still more struck with dismay at the superstition of the people, as gross as any he may have witnessed in the far south, amongst the lazaroni on the shores of the Bay of Naples. And yet the population of the Riviera have been now twelve years under a free constitution."

The stationary state of the population, as regards moral enlightenment, the writer ascribes to the influ-

* *Avvisatore Alessandrino*, September 5, 1864.

ence of the Paolotti, and complains that the government, while it fetters other societies, gives unbounded liberty of action to an "association which tramples on every law, abuses every privilege of human intercourse, whether of the family or of friendship, and forms one of the mightiest existing obstacles to the stability and independence of the kingdom of Italy." *

It is thus seen that if the king has his army in Italy, so too has the priest. The sacerdotal host is not less numerous than the royal one; and perhaps, could its muster-roll be seen, a little more so. The soldiers that compose it are admirably drilled: their leaders have them well in hand: they are full of zeal, and pant for the fight: and, when the lists shall have been marked out, they will play, we apprehend, not the least conspicuous part on that great field on which the final destinies of Italy must be decided.

* *Breve Saggio della cosienza dei Cardinali nella valutazione dei miracoli del dot Domenico Bomba di Roma.* Genoa, 1863.

CHAPTER IX.

HINDRANCES TO PROGRESS.

AMONG the hindrances to reform in Italy—for we shall glance at the dark, before turning to the bright side of the question—the foremost place, in our opinion, is due to the first article of the *Statuto*. That article is as follows:—“*The Catholic Apostolical and Roman Religion is the only Religion of the State.*” In this enactment the statesmen of Italy took an old error and made it the corner-stone of their new edifice. From the moment they assumed this article as the controlling principle of their policy, their task became the preposterous, if not impossible one, of rearing a temple to freedom on the ancient foundations of despotism.

This initial error has been fruitful in difficulties. If Italian statesmen have stumbled in their path, as stumbled they have, it has been over this stone of offence, placed where we find it, right in their road, by their own hands. They have made war on that very church-system which they had sworn, in the first article of the *Statuto*, to uphold. They have seized the lands, confiscated the revenues, suppressed the orders, abolished the privileges, and even imprisoned the priests of the church of Rome. This may be the best policy in the circumstances; its merits or its demerits we do not now discuss—enough that it is their policy, and that it is in

direct variance to what, *theoretically*, their policy ought to have been, regard being had to the fundamental article of the constitution.

In truth, the statesmen of Italy occupy in this matter an illogical position, and an illogical position is by necessity a weak one. They stand where they are galled by the arguments of their opponents, and where they are condemned by their own principle, a principle posted up in a place so prominent, that it is continually in the view of all—the forefront of the constitution. Thus they halt and vacillate: to-day they encroach upon the church, and to-morrow they concede to Rome more than the nation would. This hour it is the priest who shouts out “Spoliation,” and the next it is the people who upbraid their rulers with truckling to the priesthood.

It may be said, that so long as the government does not wholly ignore Roman Catholicism, it does not violate the first article of the *Statuto*. But this is no answer.

When the government of Italy accepted the pope and his religion as the creed of the state, it accepted that creed as the councils of the church had defined it. The government had no right, after their acceptance of the creed, to sit in judgment upon it, and say, This portion is a corrupt addition which must be rejected; this other is a false dogma and must be abandoned; and this is an excess of clerical power which must be restrained. From all such interference, those who adopt this creed, whether individuals or governments, are, by that creed itself, most stringently shut out. Nevertheless, the rulers of Italy did adopt this creed as the national one, and their policy ever since has been a series of aggres-

sions upon it. Not that we blame them for that policy: what we blame them for is that they should have inaugurated it by the declaration of a principle which makes it inconsistent and illogical.

But, in truth, circumstances left the statesmen of Italy no choice. Acting with what light they had, they adopted a certain line of policy; but a higher power has compelled them to follow another. This compulsion continues, and will continue to act upon them, till some great crisis shall arrive which will bring their *theoretical* and their *actual* policy into harmony by sweeping away the first article of the *Statuto*. The debts of the state are already enormous; and are hourly increasing. The annual deficit at present is estimated at about twelve millions sterling. Million is added to million, yet the exigencies of the nation, like the daughter of the horse-leech, still cry, "Give, give." There is but one fund in the country from which that debt can be defrayed—that of the church; and every new million voted for state purposes implies a new confiscation of ecclesiastical property. True the *Statuto* sacredly guards that property from all such appropriation; but how can the statesmen of Italy help themselves? To keep running into debt is to rush into bankruptcy; and to appropriate the wealth of the church is to violate the *Statuto*. They are on the horns of a dilemma. They find it equally impossible to alter the *Statuto*, or to change their policy. If they do the first, and blot out the fundamental article of the constitution, they proclaim a revolution; and if they do the second, and keep running up their score of millions, they invoke something more terrible still—inevitable destruction.

Another great hindrance to the emancipation of Italy

is the divorce which has there taken place betwixt religion and morality. The *genius* of Romanism, which is ritualistic in contradistinction to spiritual, fosters the estrangement betwixt morals and religion; and the *interests* of Romanists tend obviously to widen the breach; for where pardon may be had for money, the sins of the people are the wealth of the priesthood. It need not, therefore, astonish us that those *two*—religion and morals—which God has joined, should in Italy be widely sundered.

It is not easy to make plain to readers in our country how complete and entire is the divorce betwixt religion and morals in Italy. The separation is absolute. The very idea of "worship in spirit" is extinct in Italy. Not the *thing* only, but the *idea* has perished. It is this which makes the matter so hopeless as regards the adult population of the peninsula. To talk of reforming the religion of the Italians, presupposes that there is a religion to be reformed, which, in any proper sense of the word, there is not. What has first to be done, is to restore the idea of religion—to revive the faculty of understanding what religion is, and what is its real nature. With the youth in the schools this may be done, but with regard to the grown population, their minds, darkened by the total exclusion of all positive truth, and their faculties and feelings scorched and burned up by the sirocco influences of a whole lifetime, this is possible only to a higher Power.

In Italy it is religion to kiss a church door, or a priest's hand, or the hem of his robe, to adore a crucifix, to abstain from certain sorts of food on certain days, to scourge one's self, and to pay one's ecclesiastical dues. It is a thing of bodily performance, entirely and exclusively.

It has no connexion, in the mind of the Italian, with purity, or truth, or love, or reverence, or any one moral or spiritual quality. We speak, of course, of the nation in the gross; not of the spiritual or Christian men who may be found in Italy. We describe the popular notion as evidenced by the whole course of Italian life. As a consequence, Italy presents the somewhat contradictory spectacle of being at once eminently religious, and notoriously vicious. Piety and profligacy there grow up together. They flourish in the same soil, in the same breast. Instead of being mutually repulsive, they are mutually attractive. It is the greatest criminals who are the most religious men. Nor is this anomaly difficult of solution. The more the hand is defiled with crime, and the more the conscience is burdened with guilt, the greater is the punctuality and scrupulosity of the man in his religious performances. The brigand goes fresh from his orisons to Mary to rob and murder. The harlot rises from her knees before the Madonna to tread anew her path of shame. "Nowhere," says Mark Monnier, in his *Camorra*, "is the Virgin more fervently adored than in the prisons by the malefactors and camorristi. The first demand made of a new-comer, immediately on his entry into the cells, is for a penny to furnish oil for the Virgin's lamp." "It is well known," he adds, "that at Naples, not only is the image of the Virgin placed in all the highways, but also in places more profane—in the shops, in the cafés, in the taverns, and even in the brothels. The inmates of these latter places say their prayers with exemplary regularity before the image of the Mother of God."*

* *La Camorra : notizie storiche raccolte e documentate, per cura di Marco Monnier.* Florence, 1862, p. 31.

The state of morals in Italy is a thing we scarce dare describe. "The church pardons and absolves," say the Italians, "let us sin, and her grace will abound." Something like this is the practical creed of the majority. Truth is unknown. Honesty, and its correlative, confidence, are sadly at a discount in commercial transactions. Chastity, the virtue of a rising race, as its opposite is the sure mark of a sinking one, is, on the testimony of all who have lived any time in the country, and have been close observers of its social life, lamentably low.

Tales circulate in Italy which imply that the iniquity of all ranks, from the royal house downwards, is, in this regard, full. The same sins for which God rained fire and brimstone upon Sodom of old defile the Italy of this day. From the hoar head down to the stripling, society is corrupt—frightfully, incredibly corrupt. The oftener one visits that country, and the longer he sojourns in it, the deeper and gloomier do his convictions on this head become. In truth, in its frightful moral putrescence lies the main source of the danger of Italy. The self-denial, the high aims, the courageous resolves, which have birth only in a pure state of a nation, are here lacking. It is not in numbers that the Italians are weak; they are twenty-one millions: it is not in soldiers that they are weak; they have an army of half a million. The *soul* of the nation is faint. With virtue will return courage.

Lewdness and blood are never far apart; and some lamentable instances of the close connexion betwixt the two came under the author's observation during his stay in Italy. We shall mention but one case. It occurred at Naples in October, 1864, during the author's

sojourn in that city. The body of a priest was one day found at the bottom of a well in a condition which left no doubt that he had been murdered. The sensation caused by the discovery was great, the priest being president of one of the theological seminaries of the town, and well known. His death had been a cruel one. His body was pierced through and through with numerous wounds. The affair was at first involved in mystery, but in a few days it was cleared up by the apprehension of the chief perpetrator, who confessed the crime, stating that he had been hired to do the deed by one to whom the priest was an object of jealousy.

The circumstances of the assassination furnish melancholy proof of the sunken condition of the Neapolitans, and the small account in which life is held. The assassin proceeded to a certain garden in the suburbs of Naples, which the priest was known to frequent. The garden was a public one, and there the murderer hired eight accomplices to assist him in despatching the priest. Two of these men kept watch at the gates; one threw a towel from behind over the victim's head, two held his arms, two his legs, and two despatched him with their knives, and then flung his body into the well. But how dreadful the state of society, when one can go, on any day of the year, to a place of public resort, and hire the first half-dozen persons he meets to aid him in any affair he may have on hand. Under the Bourbons the very sentinels posted at these places were known sometimes to rob those who entered. Other cases rise before our mind, but let us drop the veil and proceed.

It needs no illustration to make plain the mighty hindrance which such a state of morals offers to both

the political and spiritual emancipation of the country. It extinguishes patriotism at its source. The self-indulgent Italian asks, "What good will this birthright do me?" He must love his hearth before he can love his country. The priest holds him through his vices. As he cannot hide from himself that one day or other he shall need to be pardoned and absolved, he deems it vastly convenient to have a church that gives pardon and absolution on terms so easy. A religion that enforces morality would not quite suit the case. The Italians complain that Protestantism is cold: their meaning oftentimes is, that it is virtuous.

The entire misconception of Protestantism on the part of the Italians, and their deep-rooted hatred of it, is a third very formidable hindrance in the country's path of progress. This dislike, as intense as it is mistaken, is a thing scarce conceivable by us, and yet it is not wonderful in the circumstances. The priests have had it all their own way in Italy these three centuries. They have been the only channels of information, and their word has been infallibly credited by their flocks. They have painted Luther, Calvin, and Knox as monsters, whose lives were full of unnatural crimes, and their deaths of unnatural horrors. Like unto them are all Protestants, their lives a little less enormous, and their deaths a little less terrible. The Protestant, as the imagination of the ordinary Italian paints him, is a man who worships the devil, and curses God every morning, and all day through. In short, Protestantism has come from the abyss, and, as might be expected from its origin, is foully and frightfully demoniacal. So have the priests taught, and so generally have the people believed.

In proof we cite the "Catechisms"* of Father Perrone, Professor of Theology in the Collegio Romano, and, by common consent, Rome's first living theologian. Surely such a man will have some regard to truth—will observe some measure in his statements. But, no! Speaking of Protestantism, he teaches the youth of Italy to answer that its spirit is "rebellion against Christ;" that its essence is "atheism;" that its professors are "the flock of Epicurus;" that it was spread in Europe by the same means by which the Turk propagated his religion; that its tendencies are "immoral," as shown in the state of England, whose religious condition is "chaos," and whose social condition exhibits "a population wallowing in thefts, murders, rapes, and all manner of crimes, and sunk in a poverty so deplorable, that they have no alternative but to die of hunger, or toil all day long amid machinery, or work in mines underground." Such are the propositions which Professor Giovanni Perrone maintains in his Catechism on Protestantism. It is, he says, "horrible in theory, immoral in practice; it is an outrage on God and man; it is destructive to society, and at war with good sense and decency."† Its first propagators, he says, were men who "deserved the gallows;" and, after painting their characters in the blackest colours, he goes on to describe their deaths, which were, he tells us, worthy of their lives. Passing over his account of the last hours of Luther and Zuingli, we shall permit him to conduct us to the death-bed of Calvin. "Calvin," says

* *Catechismo intorno al Protestantismo ed alla Chiesa Cattolica*, per Giovanni Perrone, D.C.D.G. Rome, 1861.

† *Catechismo intorno al Protestantismo ad uso del Popolo*, p. 24.

Father Perrone, "died of a shameful disease, despairing, blaspheming, and calling upon the devil, being eaten of worms."*

This catechism, which has as its motto, "These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you,"† has been circulated, as we learn from the preface, in scores of thousands, not in Italy only, but in France, in Spain, and in Germany. Coming from a man of the high standing of Perrone, the readers of this catechism unhesitatingly accept its statements as "the truth, and nothing but the truth" regarding Protestantism. No wonder then that the bulk of the Italian people should regard our creed as a heterogeneous compound of impious beliefs, and England, correspondingly as a pandemonium of nameless vices and frightful sufferings.‡

As a fourth hindrance to progress in Italy, we may cite a miscellaneous class of impediments, some of which, individually, are of small account; but all of which, taken collectively, form a somewhat formidable aggregate. In Tuscany, and generally throughout Italy, the new government retained almost all the old functionaries. This policy was adopted in the hope of conciliating these men. It has failed, however, sincerely to attach them to the new order of things.

* "Calvino per ultimo morì disperato bestemmiando e invocando il diavolo, di una malattia la più vergognosa, rosso dai vermi."—*Catechismo intorno al Protestantismo ad uso del Popolo*, p. 28.

† 1 John ii. 26.

‡ In his *Catechismo intorno alla Chiesa Cattolica*, Father Perrone is at pains to teach that heresy being a crime against the state, ought to be proceeded against by the civil power and the Inquisition. He adds that in countries where heretics are the majority, this method need not be taken. The reader may be able to divine the reason of this astonishing liberality. See *Lezione XI. Della Inquisizione*.

Educated in the Bourbon creed, and deeply tainted with the Bourbon corruption, they are still Bourbon at heart, and serve the new government for the simple reason that it gives them bread. They are drags upon the wheel; and at the first blush of revolution they will, to a certainty, turn against the government they serve, and rally again round the old flag.

Then rumours of change are kept circulating in Italy, in order to shake men's confidence in the stability of the government. The Bourbons are soon to return; so it is whispered by those who profess to know more than their neighbours; and a people who have seen so many changes find it easy to believe that they may see yet another. A priest of Perugia, in the summer of 1864, perambulated certain districts, frightening people with the prophecy that in 1866 not one Liberal would be left in all Italy; and that a second St. Bartholomew would effect a speedy and complete riddance of the whole pestiferous brood. It is to be hoped that this man's zeal had touched his head, and that what his hints foreshadowed was a mere visionary danger, and no real plot then being hatched by the motley and multitudinous enemies of free institutions in Italy.

The confessional, too, is diligently worked against the government. Liberal politics and Protestant principles are the two unpardonable sins, and to discover who are guilty of these sins is now the grand aim of the confessional. Inside each box is hung a card with a list of "reserved cases," which the ordinary confessor has no power to pardon, but must send to a higher tribunal. The list includes unnatural crimes; but at the head of the list, as the first and greatest enormity, is *heresy*. It is true, that few, save women, go to con-

fess ; but that is enough : the whole of society is thus laid hold upon, the secrets of husbands, fathers, and brothers are wormed out, and the Liberal is detected and hunted down. "Rome," says De Boni, "has yet power over woman in Italy, and that is power in the house. And hence, before Italians can conquer Rome, they ought first of all to retake their own domestic sanctuary."

Every confessional in Italy is a barrier to progress. And they exist there in hundreds and thousands. In the little church of San Matteo, in Genoa, the author counted not fewer than twenty confessional boxes, affording accommodation to double that number of penitents. Still more numerous are they in the great cathedrals. Italy swarms with agitators, but then, unlike the noisy tribe which ply this vocation in other countries, the agitators of Italy eschew the platform. They seat themselves quietly in the confessional, and dropping the green veil in front, and opening the perforated lattice in the side, they pour out their treason in whispers.

There is, moreover, great diversity of code in the peninsula. Not fewer than seven codes were in vigorous operation in 1864, within the one kingdom of Italy. The Ducal laws were suffered to remain in force within the old territories, to the hindrance of justice, and the retarding of the unification of the nation. To change the speech is even more difficult than to change the laws of the people ; and the motley races that peopled this peninsula on the fall of the empire, have left their traces in the numerous and diverse dialects that are spoken by their descendants. This is no small impediment both to the political and the spiritual

regeneration of Italy. The author was told of two merchants, the one from Milan, and the other from Genoa, who met at a place mid-way betwixt the two cities to transact some business. To their dismay they found on meeting that their dialects were mutually unintelligible, and they had to call in an interpreter in order to the transaction of their matters. And yet Milan and Genoa are not much more than a hundred miles apart. The obstacle this interposes to the success of the evangelist can easily be perceived. There has been, doubtless, a very gratifying distribution of Bibles and religious books and tracts in Italy, but without a corresponding result in the country districts. The peasants speak a miserable *patois*. Books printed in that *patois* are the only ones they can read, when they can read at all. Pure Italian literature is nearly as far above the understanding of the bulk of the peasantry as if it were a foreign language.

So many, and, in character so varied, are the obstacles that exist in Italy's path. If we dwell upon them, it is not to inspire distrust of the country's rising; but to show that those who expect that it shall rise all at once, expect an impossibility, and entertain hopes which can only be fulfilled after surmounting great difficulties. The country is rising; it will rise; but it is not risen yet: and before it shall have succeeded in disentangling itself from the toils that surround it, and completing the mighty task that lies before it, it will be strange indeed if it finds not new occasions for self-denial, for endurance, for courage.

On the political hindrances of an external kind we do not touch; these lie beyond our range. But there is one special hindrance within the country—perhaps

the greatest of all—to which we must advert. This is the place which the church has given to MARY in Italy. This may be viewed as being not so much a separate hindrance to progress, as part of that whole system which progress is to destroy. Nevertheless, Mariolatry is so skilful an adaptation to the Italian mind, that it forms one of the main buttresses of the whole system, and by consequence, one of the principal obstacles to the country's complete emancipation.

To the Italians Mary is God, and worship is simply the adoration of the Virgin. Viewing Romanism in the light of the Bible, this is its crowning sin; viewing it as a system contrived to seduce and enslave, this is its masterpiece. To understand how it is so, let us think how deep in man's heart is placed the feeling of the need of a being like unto himself to mediate betwixt him and God; how intensely the soul yearns for an object of worship on whom it can take hold by its human affections, and who in turn can take hold of it by his human sympathies! The Bible completely meets this want by the God-man. Between the Divine Majesty and ourselves it places one who is God, and, at the same time, our brother; very man and very God. One who thinks through a human understanding, sympathises through a human heart, and has carried our nature with him, in all its powers and affections, to the right hand of the throne. But Popery veils, blots out, the God-man as mediator, and in his room it presents us with Mary, who is to the Italian the "one living and true God;" for, though the Father and Son are known, they are accessible only through Mary, and they stand so far behind

and beyond her, that to the Italian they are vague, shadowy, and unknown.

Numerous instances of this crowd on our memory, as they must on the memory of every one who has visited Italy. *Mary* is the first name to be lisped in childhood, the last to be uttered by the quivering lips before they are closed in death. Around the neck of the infant is suspended a small image of the Virgin; when the babe seeks the breast it must first kiss the image, and thus literally does it draw in the adoration of Mary with its mother's milk. When that babe grows up to youth's estate, he beholds the shrines of the Virgin on every highway, in every street, in every church, in every house, in the theatres, in the courts of justice, in all conceivable places. To Mary he sees all knees bent, from those of the pope to those of the brigand. The supplicating whine of the wrinkled hag at the church door asking alms, is for the sake of Mary. The song of the peasant girl as she gathers the grape in autumn, is in praise of Mary. The rattling volley of oaths which the waggoner and the buffalo-herd too frequently let fly, is pointed with the name of Mary. She is the "Mother of Providence." It is her patronage that is besought in all ventures. The Roman buys a ticket in the lottery. No sooner has he made his purchase, than he hurries to the shrine of the Virgin, falls on his knees before it, and by vows and supplications coaxes Mary to befriend his enterprise. The lottery is drawn: his ticket comes out a blank. What does he do? He hurries back to the same shrine, and discharges the first outburst of his wrathful disappointment, where but a day or two before he had offered his prayers and entreaties. He reproaches, vilifies, and blasphemes

her whom a little while ago he had so earnestly and reverently supplicated. But in all this he is only doing what his pagan ancestor, two thousand years ago, did before him.

Were the New Testament to be written at this hour, Rome would blot out the name of Christ, and substitute in every place that of Mary. Take a proof. The author one day chanced to stroll into the street leading to the Porta Angelica near to the Vatican. He there observed, close by the gate, a church with a fair marble pediment, and upon it were graven in large letters the following words—"Let us come to the throne of the Virgin Mary, that we may find grace to help us in our time of need." The Roman sees "Hebrews iv. 16," quoted underneath. He never doubts that this is a truthful reading of the Scripture : he has not verified the passage, it is true, but then he has no means of doing so, seeing the Bible is forbidden to him. Somewhere in the near vicinity of the city, sleep the ashes of the great Apostle whose words are here so grievously perverted ; and thankful ought the Sacred College to be that he does *sleep*. For were Paul to arise and re-enter Rome, he would thunder from the Capitol, even more terribly than from Mars' hill of old, till not only living men, but dead statues would shake on their marble pedestals.

The pope deems it the crowning glory of his pontificate, that he was permitted to decree the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. So great an event—an epoch, as he justly accounts it, in the history of the Papacy, and in his own—he has striven to commemorate by setting up a pillar in the Piazza di Spagna. In this the pope but followed the example of his predecessors, who, not content with the footprints they have left in history,

have written their names on all the old marble which they could find in and around Rome. But Pius ix. had no right to assemble, at the foot of the Column of the Immaculate Conception, Moses, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and all the prophets, and compel them to cast their crowns down before the Virgin, and to say, "Thou art worthy, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." Yet this Pius ix. has done. Graven upon the base of the pillar are numerous passages from the "Law and the Prophets," but so quoted or twisted, that from being prophecies concerning Christ, they are prophecies concerning Mary, whom they speak of as the "Promised Seed," and the "expected Saviour," who was to take away the sin of the world. No other interpretation can the Romans put upon them; no other interpretation is possible for one who has read only the mutilated and perverted extracts on the column. Surely it was with reference to such enforced copartnership of prophets and apostles with Rome in her worship of images, that the words were spoken of her long ago, "Rejoice over her, ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her."

One day, the author happened to be examining one of the churches of Naples, when the sacristan, leading him into the vestry, took him to a corner of the room where was a recess covered with folding doors. Throwing open the doors, the sacristan showed him a niche, containing a beautiful painting of Mary. "Every time," said he, "the priest goes into the church to say mass, he kneels down before the Madonna, and thanks our Lady for giving up her Son." So again "our Lady" is adroitly substituted for Christ. "God so loved the

world," says Scripture, "that he gave his only begotten Son." But Rome reads the words, and teaches her people to read them thus—"Mary so loved the world that she gave her only begotten Son." And thus to her is transferred the whole of our redemption.*

The church of Rome, it is sometimes said, has maintained the divinity of Christ. True, she has done so; but she has maintained his divinity with an emphasis which to the feeling and thought of her members destroys his humanity. She strives to keep the humanity of Christ out of view, lest Mary should be forsaken as the way to God. Rome was terribly incensed against Renan's *Life of Jesus*: but on grounds very different from those on which Protestants took objection to that work. Renan had brought into view the human side of the Saviour. He had exhibited Christ with the sympathies and affections of a man. He had made him, in short, to the dismay of Rome, the rival of Mary. Not only had Renan blasphemed God—that might have been forgiven to him: he had blasphemed the "Mother of God," and that is a crime never to be forgiven. Let us suppose that Christ himself in the flesh should appear at Rome. How very inconvenient! What a commotion in the *Sacra Consulta*! That he should be seen of the people as "the Man Christ Jesus," and so the "one mediator between God and men,"

* In illustration of the hold which Mariolatry has on the mind of the Italian peasantry, it may be mentioned that on the *festa* of her Assumption, annually celebrated in Messina, infants are bound to the spokes of the wheels of an immense machine which is dragged through the streets in her honour. Many of these infants perish, and are supposed to ascend with Mary to heaven. These facts are asserted by Madame Caracciolo in her recent work. Her statements were fully confirmed to the author by M. Appia, of Naples.

what a blasphemy against the Virgin ! How the old city would ring with the cry, " Crucify him ! Crucify him ! "

Rome knows Christ as God only, not as the God-man. He is the judge. He occupies the same place in the papal system which Jupiter the Avenger occupied in the pagan system. To use the strong, but true words of Marco Monnier, " Christ the *crucifier* has taken the place of Christ the *crucified*." In the room of the High Priest who can be touched with our infirmities, Rome presents us with a number of Madonnas and saints, who supply the human side of Christianity. Art has covered over the falsehood and glorified it. Mary, or rather the Marys—for to the imagination of the Italian there are not one, but many Madonnas—has been rendered divine by a process of multiplication. Mary, in this way, fills the whole land—the whole earth. She is invested with a sort of omnipresence. " I am sure there are at Rome," says Misson, " at least sixty churches dedicated to as many several Madonnas ; and if one should run over all the countries that are possessed by Roman Catholics, he would doubtless meet with several thousands. 'Tis worth observing, that one who is a devout adorer of *St. Maria della Scala*, for example, would not so much as burn the end of a taper for *St. Maria Grotta Pinta*, and several other Madonnas. I had a pleasant conference the other day, on this subject, with a Cordelier, who comes, sometimes to visit us with his budget. The good friar told me, that as the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were worshipped under different ideas or notions, without injuring the unity and simplicity of God, so all the various Madonnas may be invoked under several names, and as if they had different functions ; though really all that vast multitude of them

may and ought to be reduced to the *Only Mother* of God." Misson was going to object to the friar's explanation, when he saw that "he was beginning to grow too hot, and was going to prove that I had a sort of religion peculiar to myself, if I had not seasonably pacified his anger by throwing somewhat into his budget."*

In fact, Rome has added a fourth person to the Adorable Three in the Godhead. Speaking of the passion for Mary, De Boni says very strikingly, "The church so well understands that in woman lies her strength, that she now places in woman the scene of her victory or defeat. . . . Rome insists on the dogmas of the Trinity, etc., nevertheless to the Three she has added a fourth, on which she constantly insists, using the least rational part of her religion as her chief means of proselytising, because she knows that the female sentiment will co-operate with her. . . . The church, regarding but little her decisions and indecisions, has striven these last years to crown the ardent desires of all the ascetics of the middle ages, by proclaiming the sovereignty of the female element in the very bosom of the Godhead. Between the Father and the Son, she has seated the Mother as Queen. After such an invasion of Mary into the Trinity, this dogma becomes modified in its nature and in its strength; for, if there were nothing else in it, the Holy Spirit lies forgotten in the Trinity, without lovers and without worshippers. . . . The images which in our country churches wink and weep are always those of Mary: Jesus is hardly known by name."†

* *A New Voyage to Italy*, vol. ii., part i., pp. 214, 215.

† *L'Inquisizione o il Calabro Valdese*, pp. 8, 9.

CHAPTER X.

THE MOVEMENT IN LOMBARDY—ECCLESIASTICAL
INDEPENDENCE.

DESPITE the tacit agreement on the part of the Italians that the Papacy must be preserved—despite the conviction that it is the sheet-anchor of their country, which, while it keeps its hold, will enable them to outride all the storms of this great era of transition, but which, if uplifted, will bring on inevitable and fearful shipwreck,—despite, we say, this conclusion, in which all classes of Italians at this hour concur, with a unanimity that is amazing, there is in Italy a great movement which, with force silent but steady, is bearing them onwards to the goal of national emancipation.

In former days, although the whole country was popish, each several province was popish after its own fashion. The Catholicism of Lombardy differed from that of Tuscany, as did the Catholicism of Tuscany from that of Rome or Naples. And so is it once more. The whole country is in motion; but every several province is in motion after its own way, and that a way borrowed from the peculiar type of its former Catholicism. The movement in truth is one, one in its origin, one in its great features, as it is destined to be one in its issue; but it takes various forms in various parts of the country, and it can be

understood as a whole, only by taking Italy piecemeal, and the movement piecemeal. In this, as in other cases, the diversity of phase at the circumference but attests all the more emphatically the grand unity that exists at the centre.

It is the old country which is rising up. It is the vitalities which have been long enchained beneath Catholicism, as vegetation is enchained beneath the ice of the Alps, or the snows of Siberia, which are beginning to stir. These vitalities are moving everywhere; in the great cities and in the rural hamlets, in the schools of Florence and among the herdsmen of the Alpine valleys. They are not of to-day, nor even of a century ago, nor do they date only from the Reformation, though then they flourished for a moment, only to perish like an early growth before the returning frosts. They have lain dormant in the soil since the Christian era, and now, hearing in their dark subterranean depths the voice of spring, they are all at once, from the snowy summit of the Alps to the Sicilian strand, beginning to come forth into the light. As we proceed we shall see wondrous manifestations of the way in which the present is linked with the past. We shall meet marvellous instances of men, who lived ages ago, but who, dying, were forgotten, utterly forgotten, in Italy, now rising from the dead, entering on a new life—finding, after many days, the life they lost on the scaffold or at the stake—speaking with a more powerful voice than ever to their countrymen, and influencing more powerfully than before their country's destinies. Their works, done in faith, do truly follow them. By dying, they overcame death, and die no more, being risen in the power of an endless life.

Let us begin at the northern frontier of the land. Crossing the Alps we descend on the great plain of Lombardy. Level as a floor, enclosed betwixt the mighty Alps which uplift their snow-clad peaks in the north, and the Apennines whose azure summits appear in the south, this plain presents an area of many thousands of square miles in measurement. Luxuriant as a garden, and watered throughout by great rivers which have their source amid the ice-fields of the eternal hills, the very aspect of the plain is fitted to produce a certain enlargement and elevation of mind. All its objects are great. The white peak, the tempest which darkens it, the thunder reverberating among the hills, the river which rolls with flood so resistless from the mountains, the illimitable plain, with its mulberry groves, its corn-fields, and its princely cities, all speak of freedom. Accordingly, Lombardy has a distinct political and social individuality. Its moral and ecclesiastical characteristics are as strongly marked as its physical features.

One characteristic of Lombardy is its love of freedom. This has come down to it from ancient days. In the end of the fourth century there presided over the diocese of Liguria, of which Milan was the capital, a man as holy in life as he was courageous of spirit. Under Ambrose the Lombards fought a great battle for the purity of their faith against the Arian empress Justina; and they were rewarded for their fidelity and zeal by ages of independence and freedom. Not till the beginning of the eleventh century, as M'Crie informs us, were the bishops of Rome able to establish their authority in Milan. Ere this time most of the churches of the west had submitted to the yoke

of the pontiff, and the night of papal error lay thick over all countries ; but this favoured land of Lombardy enjoyed gospel light, and along with the gospel the liberty which ever accompanies it. The near proximity of the Waldensian church doubtless contributed to this result, for from the ramparts of Milan, one can descry on the western horizon the silvery peak of Monte Viso, where shone the lamp of the Alps ; and it is reasonable to suppose that some rays ever streamed down from it upon this plain ; and this, together with the memory of Ambrose, may help to account for the fact that Lombardy retained the gospel, its own liturgy, and the independence of its church government, down to a period comparatively recent. These things must be taken into account, for it is in the past of each district of Italy that we are to seek the explanation of its present.

Well, the form the movement takes in Lombardy is that of an effort towards ecclesiastical freedom. The spirit of Ambrose is beginning to live again. The echoes of his freedom-inspiring voice are coming back from the past. The priests of Lombardy are beginning to blush for the vassalage to the see of Rome in which they are sunk. They feel that their fathers would have spurned it ; they know that they long resisted it ; and the idea begins to be entertained of again asserting their independence of Rome. The project of forming an independent church, and of popularising the election of bishops as of old time, has been mooted. Of the nine thousand priests who subscribed the protest of Passaglia against the temporal power, no inconsiderable number were from Lombardy. Milan, moreover, has been the first of all the cities of Italy to raise her

voice in behalf of a religious reformation. One of its journals in the summer of 1864 discussed the religious question in a series of spirited articles, boldly impugning the doctrine of the church, and calling for a reform of her faith, as well as a remodelling of her government. So soon as all Italy shall have joined in that demand, the reform will be, not only fairly inaugurated, but half accomplished. But as yet the movement is a long way short of this stage. A few excepted, whose eyes divine grace has opened, all unite in believing that while the government of the church is corrupt and tyrannical, her faith is pure and needs no reform.

Such, then, is the shape which the movement takes in the great northern plain of Italy. It is a memory of old freedom, prompting to some imperfectly defined efforts towards its attainment, or rather recovery. And the constitutional temperament of the people of Lombardy is helpful to such a movement. The Lombard cannot boast the fine genius of the Tuscan; nor has he the subtlety of the Genoese; nor is he impelled by the fiery ardour of the Neapolitan: but he is exempt from some of the infirmities and vices which enfeeble them. He is free from the softness which renders the Tuscan so impressible by every exterior influence, and he is not corrupted, to the same degree, by the sensuality of the Neapolitan. He is more manly, patient, and practical; he has at times offered a stout and sturdy resistance to oppression, when the more effeminate and fiery natives of the South have bowed the neck to the yoke.

Accordingly it is among the natives of Lombardy and Piedmont—at Turin and Milan—that the evangelisation has found, we do not know if we can say its deepest, but certainly its securest seat. The ground it

there conquers it more firmly holds, and feeling that it has sure footing, it advances with more confidence to new conquests. This advantage it owes at Turin to the presence of the Waldensian element, and at Milan to the grave and earnest character of the people—grave and earnest for the natives of a land which nature has made so quick and passionate, and where art has come in to stimulate all she ought to have restrained, and to foster into rankest luxuriance all she ought to have pruned. We shall subsequently give particulars : at present we simply state that in Milan the gospel has found five centres or congregations. These congregations are large, and would be larger still, could more capacious halls for their assembling be found.

But no general statement can describe the state of any one part of Italy at this hour. Although in Lombardy priest and layman are weary of the theocratic tyranny which men have substituted for the mild rule of the gospel, the liberty which the Bible offers is little understood or desired. The fanaticism of the masses would extinguish the evangelisation in a day were it not for the power of government. The priests often denounce the colporteur as a messenger from hell, whose work it is to draw souls thither. All those who listen to him, or touch his books, say they, fall under the power of the devil. In the great cities the priests see the colporteur as if they saw him not ; but in the remote villages they excite the mob to maltreat him, and to drive him with stones and execrations from their town, nay sometimes they do not disdain to beat him with their own devout hands. In Bergamo the priests excommunicated all to the fourth generation who should attend the ministry of the

evangelist. Nevertheless, the work continued to grow. What excommunication could not effect, violence, it was thought, might accomplish. Should the preacher be dealt his death blow, the flock would disperse. Accordingly, one Sabbath, in the end of December, as the evangelist was entering the door of his meeting-place, he was suddenly beset by an infuriated mob, who, assailing him with execrations and blows, felled him to the earth, and would most surely have made an end of him, had he not, in some wonderful way, escaped out of their hands. The journals which reported the outrage openly accused the priests as its concoctors and instigators.

Thus lights and shadows mottle the moral landscape of Italy at this hour, and thus do hope and fear predominate by turns in the mind of the spectator as his eye rests now on the light, and now on the darkness.

CHAPTER XI.

THE MOVEMENT IN GENOA—INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT.

LEAVING the evangelisation in Milan, and the surrounding districts, for fuller description at a subsequent stage of our work, and pursuing meanwhile that great movement which, under different phases, is really one throughout the peninsula, we go westward to Genoa. Genoa is the gate of Lombardy and the Alps.

There are few cities in the world, certainly there is no city in Italy, which can rival Genoa in the grandeur of its site. Let us set it before the reader. The coast of Italy runs northward in a tolerably straight line towards the Apennines. The shore here sinks down into swampy flats, as the Maremma; there it rises in bold headlands; and opens yonder in noble and spacious bays. Where, in its progress northwards, the coast strikes the mountains, it bends sharply towards the west, and runs along in an undulating line of bold cliffs, whose ravines are enlivened with villas, and softened by trees and shrubs. Right in the bend, reposing on the slope of the Apennines, is seated the town of Genoa. It is hung as it were above the waters of the Mediterranean. The traveller, as he casts anchor in the bay, sees its marble palaces rising above him, tier on tier, intermingled with clumps of tall cypresses, and groves of orange and myrtle. Beneath are the

calm waters of the gulf, its lofty Pharos, and its harbour, with its forest of masts, and its crowded quays. Overtopping the city are the summits of the Apennines, each crowned with its fortress. The mountains form a magnificent rampart around Genoa, enclosing its palaces within their stony arms, and, the better to defend them, running out into the sea in bold headlands on either side of the city. Such is Genoa. Venice exceeds it in a certain air of dreamy oriental placidity; Florence surpasses it in its beauty of vale and woodland; Turin in its distant wall of Alpine peaks: but not one of the three is equal to Genoa in the grandeur of its mountainous site. The city is a rare gem in an unrivalled setting—the deep blue sea on the one side, the everlasting hills on the other.

But we are here not to admire the place, but to take note of the phases which the great movement now stirring Italy assumes in the city of Columbus and the Dorias. Here it exhibits itself as a great outburst of mechanical energy and commercial enterprise. To this the Genoese are prompted by their ancient traditions, their peculiar genius, and their position on the shores of the Mediterranean. Their moral characteristic, I should say, is indifferentism. Mind is awakening on the Ligurian coast, as everywhere else in Italy, but as yet only within the sphere of material interests and pursuits. On higher subjects it is cold as an ice-field on the breast of Alp. The few aristocratic families, the immovable codini, still respect the priest, and are punctual in their performance of the rites of the church; but these excepted, the community is sunk in profound indifference to religious questions. Heart and soul are completely engrossed by commercial speculations. In

the case of many this indifferentism amounts to absolute disbelief. World beyond this, they are persuaded, there is none: and what better can a man do than enjoy the pleasures of this one, and its vices too, so far as the meagre code of conventional decorum which society there imposes, permits? The Bible they never read, nor care to do. Not one spiritual truth did the church ever address to them, and how can they believe in that of which they are profoundly ignorant? A paradise of delights and a purgatory of fire is the sum total of religion, as religion is there represented. For the first they have little desire, for the second they have little fear; and at the worst a few ghostly offices before death, which a little money can purchase, will afford a tolerable guarantee against purgatory, if a purgatory there be. They plead the conduct of the priests in justification of their infidelity.

But in the case of others this indifference has not gone the length of avowed infidelity: it is rather a settled belief that religion is exclusively a thing of beads and genuflections, to be transacted in the church and nowhere else, and having not the remotest connexion with the duties of every-day life. They hold that to occupy one's thoughts with it betokens a weakness of intellect, and to spend one's leisure in it, further than to step into a chapel once a week or so, and dip one's finger in the basin at the door, is a waste of precious time, which might be spent to far better purpose in the counting-house or at the café. Genoa is a city as pagan as was Greece or Rome. It is a city, speaking generally, without a Sabbath, without a Bible, and without God.

What contributes to this indifference, and seals over,

as it were, the Genoese to this contempt of everything beyond the material sphere, is that of late years a flood of commercial prosperity has set in upon the region. The revolution of 1848 opened a new era to the whole of Piedmont, and especially to Genoa, its seaport. The ruin into which the city of the Dorias had fallen during the half century which preceded this revolution is scarce credible by the man who witnesses its present splendour. Decay reigned everywhere. Its noble palaces were abandoned—their outer doors rusty, their windows broken, their courtyards green and weedy, their fountains stopped, their gardens overgrown and choked with weeds. Some of these once magnificent buildings had become the abode of beggars, who burrowed amid broken pillars and defaced frescoes. The narrow lanes of the city were redolent of garbage and filth. Its seas were without a sail, its harbours without ships, its warehouses without merchandise, and its population without industry.

But what a change has now passed upon Genoa; and not upon the city only, but upon the whole surrounding region! The whole locality has felt the quickening influence of a new life. That life has come from the liberty bequeathed by the revolution of 1848. A higher cultivation now clothes the valleys around the city. Terraced vineyards cover the mountains. The suburban villas have risen, from what seemed the last stage of decay, in fresh beauty. A multitude of ships, of all nations, crowd to the port. Its harbour, no longer commensurate with its rapidly expanding commerce, is being enlarged by the construction of new docks. A gay, busy, trafficking population fills the streets. The old palaces have been

cleansed, repaired, and re-decorated ; new streets have been built ; and the Genoa of our day appears in a splendour which would have been held not unworthy of the princely era of the Dorias.

With this change, which has made labour abundant and bread plentiful, the Genoese are content. They eat and drink and rejoice. The mountains around pour them out wine ; Lombardy gives them corn ; the commerce of Great Britain, France, and America flows into their port ; their magnificent railway, piercing the Apennines, diffuses that commerce over the Lombard plain, and carries it as far even as the towns of Southern Germany. In return, these distant regions send back to Liguria the produce of their soil, and the fruits of their industry. Thus Genoa supplements the laces and velvets of her own looms with the linens of England, the cottons of America, and the silks of France. She replenishes her table by adding to the dainties of her own land the honey of Switzerland, the butter of Milan, the paste of Naples, and the wines of Palermo. Her markets are enriched with the gold of California, the coral of the Red Sea, the iron and coal of Great Britain, and the sugars of Brazil. Sitting at the meeting place of this enriching and luxurious trade, Genoa is gay and happy. Every day more numerous ships enter her bay ; every day a richer produce clothes her land ; and she sees in this the guarantee of a lasting prosperity. Her natives are light-hearted as the cicalas of their own woods, and think as little of to-morrow. When the sun is down and the crimson has faded on the peak of Apennine, and the twilight has deepened into night, but night luscious and starry, the whole region bursts into song. Along the shore, in the narrow paths of the

vineyards, in the mountain villages, in the olive-woods, everywhere is heard the voice of mirth. The sounds of the harp blend with the voice of man, and fill the air with murmuring music. Nothing is wanting to complete the picture of an all-pervading happiness but one thing—that the Genoese should have “a hope beyond the grave.” But this, alas! the Genoese have not, nor care to have. The horizon of the present life bounds all.

But we cherish the hope that at no very distant day a wider horizon will unfold itself to the Genoese. Objects of which they dream not now will then awaken their energies, and absorb their souls. When that day comes, the men of the city of the Dorias will find that they have entered upon a future which will cause them to forget the brightest era of their past.

CHAPTER XII.

FLORENCE — THE LITERARY AND ÆSTHETIC MOVEMENT.

WE cross the Apennines. We feel that we are in a new country, but still an Italian country: deeper is the azure of the sky; lovelier are the forms of the landscape. Adieu to the rude *patois* of the Genoese. The Tuscan tongue, so full and rich in volume, so soft and musical in cadence, now fills the ear. What form does the movement take here? A form differing from any we have yet seen, but a form borrowed from the history and the traditions of this part of Italy. In Tuscany, as really as in Lombardy and Liguria, it is the old country that is rising up.

The old characteristics of the Tuscans, as is well known, were literary and artistic. Nature had placed their dwelling amid hills of perfect symmetry and valleys of luxuriant loveliness. Daily speaking a language full of melody, and daily looking upon a landscape full of beauty, the Tuscan, no more than the ancient Greek, could help being æsthetic. From the Tuscan pen has flowed some of the noblest poetry of Christendom; from the Tuscan chisel has come some of the finest statuary; and from the Tuscan pencil some of the grandest paintings which Europe possesses. To feel rather than to reason, and to pour forth his feel-

ings in verse of smoothest numbers, or to embody them in forms of fascinating grace, has ever been the attribute of the Tuscan.

And the moment we descend into the vale of the Arno we understand why it should be so. Here we have around us no vast expanse, bounded by towering bulwarks of rock, as in Milan, where the very amplitude of the space, and the very grandeur of the objects, give to the mind the habit of expansion, and the mood of courage. In Florence we find ourselves in a comparatively small valley. The Apennines have subsided into gentle hills, the vale runs out in a long voluptuous swell, every mountain, cypress-tree, and city dome breathes of grace, and inspires with deep, fervid emotion. The horizon that hems in and confines the eye to that one rich, passionate valley, seems also to contract the sphere of the emotion, and, by narrowing the channel in which it flows, augments the force and rapidity of its current.

A landscape of this sort, acting from age to age, has left its impress upon the mind of the Tuscan. He is gentle in disposition, sensuous in character, and æsthetic in intellect: in short, he is the living embodiment of the region in which he dwells.

Accordingly, in Florence, the movement, taking its shape from old days, is literary and artistic. It is the spirit of Cosmo which is reviving. That freedom and aspiration which literary accomplishments evoke, and which lent such a glory to the little republic under the first Medici, have again begun to inspire the words and to breathe in the writings of the men of the "Etrurian Athens." Overborne for more than two centuries by the reaction which followed the suppression of the Re-

formation in Italy, Florentine literature is reviving and is contributing its modicum of influence to that forward march of the nation, whose immediate issue is so uncertain, but whose final goal we cannot doubt. It is barbarous, say the scholars of Florence, that a people should be ruled by priests. It is not to be borne that Italy should be parted in twain, and ruled by two monarchs, simply to gratify a bishop, who wishes to be a king as well. It is an offence to all modern ideas, that because a chapter of ecclesiastics aspire to be a temporal government, every civilising influence opposed to their mediæval legislation should be banished from their territory. This great hindrance to modern civilisation must be swept away.

Such is the spirit which at this hour pervades Florence, and which is echoed from side to side in all the literary circles of Tuscany. It is not the consciences of these men which are revolted by the errors of the Church of Rome; it is their æsthetic tastes which are offended, we should say outraged, by the barbarism of the sacerdotal government. They are in arms against a monstrous mediævalism which insists upon ranking among the institutions of Europe; and they are plying the war with all the artillery of their polished tongue, and all the resources of their beautiful art. They write witty articles in the daily papers. They occasionally indite a satirical sonnet. They have a happy genius for caricature, and are making abundant use of it, as the walls and shop-windows of Florence at this day testify. All this is helpful; but to carry the war against the Papacy beyond this, does not, meanwhile, enter into the plan of the wits and the *littérateurs* of Florence.

These men labour to prove that Rome, as at present constituted, is an "organised anachronism," a system entirely out of place; and when they have done so they think they have said enough to enlist all men in the attempt to put it down. But let it be noted that what they wish to put down is not the *faith* of Rome, but the *government* of Rome. That men, whose reading has been confined to their breviary, all whose ideas are taken from the canon law, and who are fit only to edit bulls in bad Latin, should rule over their fellow-men, and dictate to them in political and literary matters, much more that they should remain sole masters of the ancient seat of political and literary power, is a monstrous anomaly, an abomination to modern civilisation; and if a biting article, or a clever caricature, can help to put an end to this state of things, the scholars of Florence will most cheerfully contribute their aid. But to forsake house and lands; to go to prison; or to burn on the square of the Palazzo Vecchio, as Savonarola did, is a thing for which the modern Tuscan has no taste.

The change of the capital to Florence has given new life to the hopes entertained by this class. The consolidation of Italy, they believe, may thus be attained without political convulsion, and without inflicting upon the country any such calamity as would, in their opinion, be the destruction of its ancient faith. The transference of the court to the city of the Medici will give a new impetus, say they, to all the influences already at work. We shall make Florence the capital of a new kingdom, the source of a new civilisation, the school of a new literature, and the seat of a new church—new in the sense of being purified from the

temporal power, not new in the sense of being brought back to the standard of Scripture.

This, say they, will accomplish all we want. Florence will become a glorious centre of light. Rome we shall assail, not with arms, but with ideas. We shall bear down upon her not with battalions of soldiers, but with a phalanx of printing-presses. We shall enclose her with all the forces of modern civilisation. She may stand out for a while, but she will be forced to capitulate at last. The new ideas will penetrate her frontier, and, forcing their way underneath her old walls, will make an irruption one day into the midst of the *Sacra Consulta* itself. Here on the banks of the Arno will stand Florence, the representative of modern times: there on the banks of the Tiber will stand Rome, the representative of the middle ages. The two will be only a hundred and fifty miles apart. Civilisation and barbarism will thus be sharply contrasted. Liberty and despotism will be compelled to look one another in the face. The result will be neither doubtful nor long deferred. The nineteenth century must prevail over the thirteenth. The middle ages, rejoining their terrible chief, Innocent III., wherever that shade may now dwell, will surrender Rome to the modern spirit; and a united Italy, climbing her Capitol, will celebrate upon her ancient rock this last and greatest of all her triumphs, the nobler because won by moral means.

Such is the brave talk which is rife at this hour in Florence, among those who claim to be the modern representatives of the Dantes, the Machiavellis, and the Michael Angelos of a former age. We pray that these hopes may be realised, though we scarce dare share

them. In the ashes even of that system which occupies Rome there is a spirit on which these men do not reckon. That spirit is not to be exorcised by mere æsthetics. If the publicists of Florence out-manœuvre the Jesuits of the Propaganda, it will be a new thing in the earth. These men forget that it was the elegant writers and the polite scholars of the times of Cosmo and Lorenzo who were the main instruments in riveting upon their countrymen of a former age the chains of superstition, and making Florence miss the grand opening for liberty which the sixteenth century brought to it. The learning and arts of her Augustan age, instead of vanquishing the Papacy, were vanquished by it.

To show that I do not colour, but state facts as they exist, I beg to record a conversation which I had with one of the literary men of Florence in the house of a common friend. This gentleman belongs to the Neo-Catholic party, to whom not a few look as the future reformers of religion in Italy; and I cannot convey a better idea of the precise sentiments of that party at this hour, and the length to which they would carry their reformation, than by detailing what passed on the occasion referred to. The conversation threw a flood of light on my own mind, and gave a new meaning to the demand for a "reform of the church," now so often heard on the south of the Alps. The conversation took place in Florence in the end of September, a day or two after the intelligence had arrived of the New Convention. The whole city was electrified, and my literary friend was expatiating on the sudden turn which promised to Florence a brighter glory than she had enjoyed even under the Medici. Then she was the head of a little republic,

now she was to become the capital of the great Italian kingdom, the fountain of a new civilisation, and the centre of a new church.

The mention of a new church gave me an opportunity of inquiring to what extent that church would be new, and how far he and his party were prepared to carry their reformation. Before I give his answer, I must premise that if there is a man in the whole Neo-Catholic party more likely than another to entertain enlarged and enlightened views on the question of religion, it is he with whom I was conversing. He is not only one of the most elegant scholars in Florence, but he has enjoyed better opportunities of knowing the truth as held by Protestants, than perhaps any other man of his party. He has associated with the Vaudois pastors, and is in habits of daily intercourse with the minister of the Scotch Church, in whose house I had the pleasure of meeting him. He had read the *Pilgrim's Progress*, Haldane on the Romans, several of the Puritan Divines, in fact he has been employed to translate these works for the use of his countrymen, writing, as he does, the Italian language with remarkable purity and elegance. When, therefore, I put my question touching the length to which he was prepared to go in reformation, I expected to find him, if not prepared to set up a Protestant church—for I well knew the dislike to the word Protestant on the part of the great body of the Italians—yet prepared to set up a church in which there should be a distinct recognition of the fundamental principle of Protestantism, the right of private judgment. I certainly expected that in his new church the Bible would be the supreme authority, and that

the people would be permitted each one to read and judge for himself. The reply grievously disappointed me.

He summed up the reformation which he judged necessary for the new church of Italy in four heads, the same, in fact, which form the programme of the Neo-Catholic party. The first was the abolition of the pope's temporal sovereignty; the second was the abolition of the feudal oath taken by all bishops to the pope; the third was the permission of marriage to the priests; and the last was the celebration of public worship in the vernacular tongue. Introduce these changes, Italy has a new church; the Papal government—that is its temporal, not its spiritual half, which some think its better half—is gone; and the reformation has touched its legitimate limits, and must stop. With this, as a complete and sufficient scheme of reform, I could not concur. I replied, "This appears to me a reform of the church, but not a reform of religion."

"Precisely so," he answered, "it is the church which is corrupt, iniquitous, tyrannical, and which, therefore, needs reformation: religion needs no reformation. The administration we would amend, the faith we ought not to touch."

"Then am I right in understanding you to mean," I inquired, "that you would leave all the doctrines of the church as they are?"

"Of course we would," he replied, "we have no intention to change the faith."

"The doctrine of the infallibility," I instanced, "which invests the church with the right of judging for every man, and dictating to him authoritatively what he is to believe, how would you deal with it?"

"Oh! the doctrine of the pope's infallibility," he rejoined, "we would give up—we *have* given it up: it is exploded."

In his answer he had changed the terms from the "infallibility of the church," to the "infallibility of the pope." In a strict argument, or in reasoning with a Jesuit, and wishing to fasten down upon him the belief in the infallibility, it would have been of consequence to correct this, inasmuch as the first—the infallibility of the church—is a dogma which must not be denied; the second—the infallibility of the pope—is an *opinion*, which a Romanist may deny: but my sole wish being not to triumph in the argument, but to elicit the real sentiments of the man with whom I was conversing, and as I doubted whether he was theologian enough to be aware of the distinction, I continued,—

"Then you would throw the infallibility overboard, how would you next proceed? You would put, I presume, the Bible into every man's hand, bidding him examine and judge for himself?"

He was startled at the proposal. "No," he quickly replied, "we cannot permit every man to judge for himself, for then every man would have his own faith, there would be no common creed, the church would be dissolved. We would call a council of bishops," he continued, "and permit them to determine the faith of the church, and what her members are to believe."

"Very well, so far," I answered; "but alongside of the council and its decrees, you would grant to all the church's members the right of private judgment—that is, the liberty of adopting or rejecting the decrees of

the council according as they may be convinced that the said decrees agree or disagree with the Bible?"

"Certainly not," he replied; "the council is to be the sole judge of the creed, and the people are to be bound to receive it." "Then," I added, "it appears to me that you retain the infallibility substantially, with this difference, that instead of vesting it in one man at Rome, you part it among a hundred or a thousand at Florence, or at Paris, or at some other place. You cannot in this way preserve liberty of conscience." "We cannot," he reiterated, "destroy religion, and the argument as you maintain it would inevitably have that effect. For if you give to every man liberty to choose a religion from the Bible, every man will choose a different religion, the church will be dissolved, and the bonds that hold society together will be lost."

"Then," I replied, "it appears to me that you are preserving religion at the expense of the understandings of men."

"My argument," he quickly rejoined, "was one of those which prove too much, and, therefore, prove nothing."

I begged he would excuse me, but I could not help being of opinion that he stood in the dilemma of having to surrender religion, or to surrender liberty of conscience and even reason itself; and I added that he ought to put to himself the question, whether a religion that could only be preserved at a cost so tremendous was worth preserving.

As a professed advocate for liberty of conscience, he could not but feel the difficulty with which I pressed him; but he fell back on the frightful consequences, as his imagination pictured them, of every man choosing

his own creed. . He foresaw Italy overrun, in the first instance, by religious anarchy, and overwhelmed, in the second, by political confusion ; for the fall of the church was sure to draw after it the ruin of the state. An argument which, as it appeared to him, brought in its train issues so formidable, could not be sound.

The result of the conversation saddened me. From that hour I began to have darker views of the immediate issue of the Italian movement. Of its final issue, I do not for one moment stand in doubt. God has originated the movement. He has advanced it by successive and well-defined stages, and he will conduct it without stop or pause, although I know not through what convulsions and reverses, to its glorious consummation in a fully ransomed and evangelised Italy ; but my hopes of the country's immediate future, after this conversation, were much less sanguine. If this man, who had enjoyed so many excellent opportunities, was nevertheless unable to understand wherein lies true liberty of conscience ; if even he could not perceive that the one outlet of Italy from all her difficulties is the door of an open Bible ; and if, knowing, as he must, the substantial unity that exists in lands where the Scriptures are the supreme rule, he yet trembled to entrust his countrymen to the self-evidencing power of the truth,—where was I to look for a man prepared to surrender the church, and come to the Bible—willing to have done with blind authority, and submit his understanding to the word of God ? If such was his state of mind, what must be that of other literary men ? What that of the great mass of his countrymen ?

In bidding adieu for the present to Florence, we

must remark that the Tuscan, with all his fine tastes and literary polish, is somewhat of a bigot. In truth, Tuscany is less liberal than either northern Piedmont or southern Naples: and this combination of æsthetic accomplishments and religious prejudice, the Tuscan inherits from his ancestors. There were no more accomplished men, and there were no greater patrons of learning, in the sixteenth century than the Medici, and yet it was this very family of the Medici who had the chief hand in putting down the Reformation, by the popes which they gave to the chair of Peter, and the queens which they sent to the throne of France. The effects of their policy are felt in Tuscany at this very day. Nevertheless, it is so far a gain to the present movement, that the old literary and æsthetic tastes are reviving, and are playing their part in the war against the temporal, although not as yet against the spiritual Papacy. For I am persuaded, that were the spiritual Papacy to be boldly attacked at this hour, or were the evangelistic movement suddenly to develop into anything like national proportions, nowhere would more keen, earnest and subtile defenders of the dogmatic system of Rome be found than in the literary circles of Florence.

CHAPTER XIII.

NAPLES—THE PANTHEISTIC MOVEMENT.

A FEW days after the above conversation, I found myself fifty miles south of Florence, on the road to Rome. Climbing the heights on the left of Chiusi, the classic Clusium, we looked down on the old town, which slept so quietly on its hill-side. The sun, breaking through the cloud, fringed its mouldering wall with gold. Mounting still higher, the mirror-like face of Lake Thrasymene, gleaming through the old olives and chesnut trees under which our road wound, was seen on the north of us, reposing beneath its great overhanging mountains, and speaking to us of those early struggles and chastisements by which the Romans were first made great, before acquiring greatness.

Besides myself, there were three persons in the interior of the diligence—shopkeepers they might be, from Perugia, or the other towns on our route. The topic of conversation was, of course, the convention between France and Italy; and, as modifying, in one particular, what I have detailed in the preceding chapter, I shall give in brief what now passed.

“Have you renounced Rome,” I asked, “by this convention?”

“No, no, no,” exclaimed all three in a breath. Our little parliament decided the matter unanimously; and,

I believe, could the whole of Italy, the clerical party excepted, have been convened in the diligence, and the vote taken, it would have been not less unanimous.

"But I have my suspicions," I rejoined, "that Napoleon intends that the removal of the capital to Florence shall be a final measure."

"Napoleon," said one of the three, gruffly, "we mistrust." For I must explain, that with a deep feeling of obligation to Napoleon, who set free the country, by the war of 1859, which he undertook against the mind of his ministers, and of that of almost every leading man in France, standing alone as Italy's friend in this matter, there is an unconquerable disposition to suspect his designs.

"But does not the convention itself," I asked, "provide for the continuance of the pope in Rome after the expiry of the two years?"

"Only as bishop," was the reply; "he can have no temporal kingdom: it is contrary to modern civilisation."

"But why, then, is he to raise an army?" I rejoined: "men do not need soldiers to defend a spiritual power?"

"We know not; but this we know, that the days of the temporal power are finished," said they. "If kingdom the pope must have, let it be in Paradise: on earth, kingdom and crown he no longer can have."

I was not a little amused to see the pontiff paid back in his own coin. In former days, when subjects lost their lives and kings their crowns in his service, he was sure to recompense them with drafts on Paradise. From this never-failing source did he defray the expenses of crusades, the losses of Philip II., the misfortunes of

the Stuarts, and a great many other casualties. And now he is sent to seek his kingdom where he has sent so many others before him to seek theirs. "Be tranquil," say the Italians, when stripping him of capital, of tiara, and all, "think of your kingdom in Paradise."

"We too," I said, "in my native Scotland, at a former period, groaned under the temporal power of the bishops, but we got rid of the temporal Papacy by first throwing off the spiritual."

"Oh!" exclaimed they all, "we cannot lose religion, it would dissolve society."

"But," I hinted, "we did not lose religion in Scotland: we found it, for, getting hold of the Bible, we took our religion from it—the source whence the pope professes to draw his."

I was glad to find that one of the three with whom I was conversing acquiesced in my opinion of the Bible as the great authority in religion. "But," he added, "it is prohibited." I understood him to refer, not to any government restrictions, for none such now exist out of the Papal States, but to the injunctions of the bishops, which still weigh with too many of the Italians.

"Do you approve of this prohibition?" I asked.

He replied, unhesitatingly, "No;" and went into a long explanation of the evils growing out of the restrictions on the sacred volume, such as the perpetuation of prejudice, the propagation of fables, of miracles, and things of that kind, all of which would have an end, he believed, were the Scriptures more widely diffused.

The day after, on the road to Trevi, my inquiries had rather a ludicrous ending. I had as my companion in the banquet of the diligence a very intelligent-look-

ing young man, and ventured to ask him whether, by the new convention, they had given up Rome? "For two years," was the reply. I expressed a hope it would not be for longer. He repeated, firmly, "For two years only." On the box, beside the driver, sat a young priest. Of the convention he had not even heard; for he turned round to ask what it meant. And now it came to be the coachman's turn to join in. Hearing my inquiry about going to Rome, and deeming it one which he was best qualified to answer, he turned towards me. "No," said he, "we do not go to Rome; we stop at Terni; and if you wish to go to Rome, you must hire a vettura."

The road to Rome by Perugia is infinitely finer than that by Viterbo. This last leads over a tract of country inconceivably wasted and gloomy, and leaves on the mind only images of desolation. The other fills the soul with grandeur, and gives one a vivid idea of the fertility and beauty of Central Italy. We halted a night at Perugia, reaching its gates after dark, and leaving them at sunrise. This gave us an opportunity of admiring the noble position of that town, on the very summit of a lofty mountain, looking down upon the "fat valleys" which lie outspread all round it. From Perugia our way lay along the base of the Apennines. We had the mountains like a great wall on our left, rich in olive-woods, vineyards, and classic towns—Foligno, Trevi, Spoleto. On our right was a noble plain—the valley of the Clitumnus—from which a harvest of corn had already been gathered, and on which another harvest of wine was fast ripening. At Terni—an Eden within wall of Apennine—we passed a quiet Sabbath. I say quiet, for great part of the popula-

tion had been drafted off to the neighbouring town of Narni, to celebrate one of the church's *festas*. There, masses and horse-races, tombolas and balloons, illuminations and dances, madonnas and roundabouts, wine, vespers, and bacchanalian songs, were all mixed up in one gorgeous act of "devotion." On Monday, engaging a vetturino, we took the road to Rome. Passing Narni, we beheld the camping ground of the *fiesta* of the day before. Great canvas booths, in the act of being taken down, piles of empty wine flasks, fragments of broken bottles, rags and straw strewn about, groups of half-inebriated men, who lingered on the scene—such memorials, in short, as might have remained of an Irish fair—were the only relics left to testify of yesterday's devotion.

Descending into the valley of the Tiber, we now entered the Papal States, where, for the first time, we had to produce our passports. We halted for the night at Civita Castellana. Silent as the grave were its darkened streets; a few figures, muffled in cloaks, glided through them. It looked like taking up one's abode in a sepulchre. Scarce greater was the animation next morning, when we took our departure. Our way lay over the famous Campagna, which now opened before us in all its sublimity of vastness and ruin. Skirting the western base of the classic Soracte, and pursuing our road along the ancient Flaminian way—with reverent steps, for we felt as if an awful doom pressed upon the land—we came, towards evening of the second day, to the gates of the Eternal city.

We shall not enter within these gates at present. Our object at this stage is to trace out and set before our readers that great multiform awakening which is

restoring Italy to her place among living nations. Pursuing our plan, we go on to Naples.

We now touch a volcanic soil ; and the people are as impulsive, fiery and explosive as the soil on which they dwell. Here all nature combines to stimulate the imagination and to give to the senses the predominance over the reason. The tints of the sky, the luxuriance of the earth, the grandeur of the mountains, the majesty of the seas—this hour reposing in profoundest calm, the next tossing in wildest tempest—all have contributed to mould that race, so warm and impressible, so subtle, but withal so volatile and untrustworthy, and ever so ready to sacrifice their gravest interests for the enjoyment of the present hour. What is the form which the movement takes here ? As everywhere else in Italy, the movement in Naples borrows its form from old influences. These have slept with the country, and are now awaking with it.

The master influences in Naples were pagan. Thickly strewn over the whole soil of Italy are the seeds of paganism, but nowhere so thickly as in and around Naples. In that city's immediate neighbourhood was the holy ground of ancient polytheism. There was the shore of Baia, there was Lake Avernus, and there were the Elysian fields, the meeting-place of the eastern and western idolatries. The region was to the ancient pagan what Rome is to the modern papist ; and this thorough polytheistic impregnation of the soil discovers itself at this day in the traditions and customs of the Neapolitans. In accordance therewith, the form of the awakening in Southern Italy is that of scepticism.

This scepticism does not take the form of the brutal and ferocious atheism of France in the last century.

It approaches more nearly the mild deism of the pagan philosophers, or the pantheism of the modern German school. In fact, it is just a revival of the atheistic pantheism which formed the chief element in the eastern idolatries, and which, flourishing first in the schools of Egypt and Greece, came afterwards to Baiæ, and has slumbered there, if we except its partial revival in the mysticism of the middle ages, till now that the awakening of mind has brought it once more above ground. Beyond doubt, pantheism is the prevailing type of the movement in the Neapolitan territory. The young men mostly study Hegel.

I chanced one day to enter the chambers of two brothers, an advocate and a physician; their table was covered with the writings of the German pantheist. The first impulse in this direction was given by a professor in the university, now dead, who was decidedly Hegelian; but, as I have already said, the soil was favourable, and now Hegelianism is the prevalent creed among those who read and speculate in Naples. "Let the old go on as they are doing," say they, "using holy water, burning candles to the saints, and confessing to the priests; it will do them no harm. We know better."

Of the appalling depth to which this atheistic pantheism has infected the mind of the upper classes I had a melancholy instance told me by an illustrious Neapolitan nobleman, who, himself a convert from Rome, is employing his fortune and his influence in bringing others to a knowledge of the truth. Only a few weeks before I had the pleasure of meeting him, the marquis had visited Salerno to be present at a public meeting, consisting mostly of young lawyers and advocates.

"We are glad to see you," said they, "but we wish to hear nothing about the evangelisation."

"I intend," said the marquis, "to speak only of God. You know we must have God—Mazzini says so; and, besides, God is a tradition, and the traditions of our country we ought to respect."

"We have nothing to do with God," they replied.

"But I am an advocate of liberty of conscience," said the marquis, trying another tack.

"So are we all," they rejoined; "we are all for liberty of conscience."

Sad confusion of thought! No God, and yet liberty of conscience! Till conscience has submitted itself to the authority of God, how can it make good its liberty against the usurpation of man? The Reformation came preaching the only possible emancipation, when it said, "God alone is the Lord of the conscience."

What may be termed "society" in Italy, as contradistinguished from the masses, may be divided, as regards the religious question, into two classes. The first are the philosophical and literary men, and especially those skilled in experimental science. They disbelieve all revelation. In their eyes, illumined with the clear light of reason, everything out of the ordinary course is an impossibility. The miracles of the Bible they place in the same category with the miracles of the priest, and pronounce on both the same summary condemnation. To demonstrate the truth of miracles to them, is simply to waste one's breath. The second class is made up of the aristocratic families and the adherents of the fallen dynasties; they are as determined in their belief as the others in their scepticism. The clearest facts, the strongest arguments, against the

dogmas of their creed and the prodigies of their church are wholly in vain. All such reasonings are blasphemies against the faith. They stop the ear. Of course there is a third class, who belong to neither, or rather to both, oscillating, as they do, betwixt the two, but unable decisively to cast in their lot with either party. They misdoubt the faith of their fathers, yet they fear to forsake it lest they should be thrown into the gulf of utter unbelief.

We must, in conclusion, add, that in Italy there are a few men of rare penetration, who have risen above the illusions and prejudices of the rest of the nation, and who clearly see that to protest against the temporal power and at the same time submit to the spiritual, is worse than vain. One of the most eloquent of these is De Boni, formerly an ultramontane. Instead of regarding the Papacy as the glory of Italy he traces to it its degradation and ruin, and calls upon his countrymen to abandon the Church of Rome at once and for ever.

He asks, "Since the middle of the sixteenth century, has not every great work stood still? Has not art degenerated into mimicry? Is not eloquence dumb? Is not the race of great men extinct? And does not a dense smoke envelope all minds? Yes; life is tranquil, but it is a desert. The calm is broken by no greater event than the cavalcade of a prince, or the procession of a bishop. The church has conquered; the strife is over; liberty is buried; peace reigns over all; and Italy, reduced to a sacerdotal caste, is immured in the tomb of a religion."

In words that ring out like a trumpet's peal, De Boni makes his closing appeal to his countrymen. "Flee from the church of the enemy. If you wait for

a miracle of the ancient revelation, or a new dogma to descend from the sky, while you neglect the teaching of your own experience and of past history, you never will come out. Not a day passes in which Truth adds not a ray to her crown, and yet you cannot read the riddle of centuries! Do you wish to dwell eternally in the darkness? If the way is long, this instant set your feet in it. . . . If God be a being all harmony, what greater offence can there be in his eye than this living contradiction in your breast. Cease to be inconsistent. Abandon the old church. Leave the dead with the dead. . . . If to worship in the temple of nature will not content you, if you cannot account good works the best prayers, if the love of justice and liberty will not suffice, then pray with the Vaudois, worship with the *evangelici*; but, at least, abandon the sepulchre, come out into the light.”* .

Such is the great uprising of mind at this hour in Italy. The movement is essentially one, though in its aspects multiform. In Northern Italy it is a demand for religious liberty; in Tuscany it is a revival of literary and æsthetic taste; in the Neapolitan province it is an outbreak of scepticism: but all three unite their attacks around that politico-ecclesiastical system under which the country has for ages groaned. That movement must onward. It is in the power of neither pope nor kaiser to stop it. Many and mighty obstacles rise in its path. The strongest and proudest of them all, however, it will lay low and grind to powder, as with quickening speed and gathering power it rolls onward to its goal.

* *La Chiesa e l'Italia.*



CHAPTER XIV.

THE COMMERCE OF ITALY—ITS DEVELOPMENT.

THE evangelisation is destined to be the crown of the movement. Italy will consolidate her liberties, not when she obtains possession of Rome, but when she submits to the authority of the Bible. But first let us briefly sketch the commercial, social, and educational development that is now taking place within her.

Observe the place of Italy on the map. How admirable its position for trade. It lies between two hemispheres; it has a soil of exuberant fertility; a coast abounding in natural harbours; the sea encompasses it on all sides save one; and that sea nature obviously meant to be the grand *entrepôt* of the world's commerce.

The Mediterranean, on which Italy is placed, is not so much a sea as a harbour. It is a capacious basin, dug in the midst of the earth, its docks the trading cities on its shore, and its gate of exit the Straits of Gibraltar. Here commerce grew up; and here infant navigation made its first essays, and creeping timidly along the shore, acquired by degrees that skill and hardihood which enabled it at length, leaving the quiet inland sea to which its early voyages had been restricted, to plough the great outer oceans of the globe. Nothing could have been better suited to the infant races

and the infant arts than the Mediterranean; for, though violent storms do occasionally sweep across its waters, its usual state is one of calm.

In accordance with the obvious destination of Providence, which scooped out this magnificent haven in the centre of the globe, the commerce of the ancient world centred on the shores of the Mediterranean. Carthage, Tyre, Alexandria, Venice, Genoa, not only indicate the several seats of that commerce, but also mark the successive epochs of its flourishing. After the fall of the Roman empire, the traffic of the Mediterranean passed northward, and found new seats amid the lagoons of the Adriatic, and on the shore of Liguria. Carthage was now in ruins, Tyre was a bare rock, but these ancient cities seemed to revive and flourish anew in the vast wealth and princely splendour of Venice and Genoa. The very errors of the Middle Ages, as well as its necessities, contributed to extend the commerce which these cities enjoyed. The frequent wars of the period rendered all adventures by land uncertain and hazardous, and the people were forced to turn their attention to the ocean. Feudalism imposed a toll upon every river, and erected a barrier in every mountain-pass, thus strangling that very commerce whose golden harvest it wished to reap. But the feudal baron could not cover the ocean with his castles as he did the land. The waves owed him no homage, and no embargo could he lay upon the ships, which, free as the winds, voyaged from shore to shore and from country to country.

When the Gothic era began to draw to a close, commerce had a second morning; and society in the north and west of Europe tasted a prosperity and freedom,

mainly through its trade, unknown to it for ages. Then came the era of the renowned Italian republics, whose chief maritime cities were Venice, Amalfi, Pisa, and Genoa. Each marks an era of grandeur in the history of the Italian commonwealth. It was not arms that gave to these republics their glory, like Rome: it was the sea. Their commerce bound together the east and the west.

But luxury, internal factions, and other causes, wrought their undoing. First Venice fell. No longer queen of the seas, and mistress of the commerce carried on upon them, the supremacy passed over to Genoa. But the city of the Dorias speedily shared the fate of that of the Doges. In the sixteenth century the decadence of Genoa was very marked. In the century following it continued to decline, and at length reached its lowest point. Commerce seemed to expire in the region where it had its birth; and those shores, so long the home of art, were given over to barbarism. On her Apennines sat Genoa, as of old, but her palaces were tenanted by beggars. She looked down on an empty harbour, on quays without merchants, and seas without a sail.

In 1782 a slight revival had taken place, as if trade were about to return to its old haunts. In that year 827 ships entered the port of Genoa, mostly, however, from harbours on the Mediterranean, for the descendants of Columbus, like the ancient mariner, recoiling from the terrors of the deep, limited their voyages to coasting expeditions. Only one ship is known in that year to have ventured beyond the Pillars of Hercules, and to have visited England. This one venturous ship excepted, the other 826 were all from Mediterranean

ports, and of these only from 200 to 300 were different vessels, the number being swelled to 827 by repeated voyages of the same ship.

With the beginning of the present century came another crushing blow to the commerce of Italy. The war between France and Great Britain broke out, followed by the decrees of Berlin, 21st November, 1806, and those of Milan, 17th December, 1807. By these the commerce of Genoa was annihilated. Her ships rotted in the port, for the European blockade was strictly enforced in the Gulf of Genoa by the squadron of Great Britain, which, mistress of the ocean, permitted no keels but her own to plough it, and no merchandise to be carried across it unless destined for her own markets. In the words of the government report on the "Commerce of Italy, anterior and posterior to its Political Regeneration," "L'erba cresce in porto-franco."*

The peace of 1814, interrupted for a moment by the campaign of Waterloo, revived the hopes of the Genoese. The blockading ships disappeared from their gulf; the decrees of Berlin and Milan were no longer in force; the gates of their harbour were opened; and now they confidently expected to see the ancient prosperity and glory of their city return. Another cruel disappointment, however, awaited them. The peace brought with it restrictions not less oppressive than those of the war. The old dynasties returned, and with them returned the old ideas. Italy was parcelled out

* "The grass grows in the free port."—*Del Commercio Italiano, Anteriore e Posteriore al nostro Rinnovamento Politico, Ministro d'Agricoltura, Industria, e Commercio, Direzione della Statistica Genie. d'Italia. Turin, 1862.*

amongst a tribe of kinglings ; doganas were erected on all the frontiers. Piedmont must not freely trade with Lombardy, nor Lombardy with Tuscany. Genoa, which had hoped to see her wharves crowded, continued to languish. In the words of the report already referred to, "it was smothered by despotism."

Italy had to wait till 1848 as the true era of its commercial revival. The same tempest which swept away the timeworn despotisms of the country, brought in the new ideas ; but as yet only in Piedmont, for in Piedmont alone was liberty able to make good her foothold. From this hour the agriculture, the industry, and the commerce of Northern Italy began to revive. Every year, almost every day, witnessed a marked improvement. The fields, the cities, the very men, seemed to grow young again. While the north was undergoing this rapid transformation, the rest of Italy was proclaiming, by its neglected fields and empty harbours, how much Piedmont had gained by retaining the liberties which the revolution of 1848 introduced, and how much the other provinces had missed by letting them go.

It was amid the convulsions of 1848, while a fearful tempest was sweeping over the land, and monarchs were seeking shelter in flight from the popular wrath, that the Piedmontese planned their many social and commercial reforms. The era betwixt 1848 and 1859 is marked as that in which the great Carlo Alberto railroad was finished and opened. It was during the same years that those commercial treaties were concluded which have so favourably affected the relations between people and people, modified or abolished the oppressive tariffs, reformed the sanitary regulations, and

consolidated the commercial and political machinery of Piedmont. No sooner had Piedmont completed the work of these twelve years, and shown how willing and able she was to avail herself of the advantages of liberty, than a new era opened to her. To that little state was now given the whole of Italy (the Papal States excepted), that she might govern it upon the same principles which had wrought so beneficial a change in her own condition. The war of independence broke suddenly out. It swept over the country like one of its own thunder-storms, and when it had passed it was found that the old Italy had passed with it. For the first time since the fall of the Roman empire, the different Italian nationalities were willing to unite beneath the sceptre of one monarch, and by becoming a sharer with Piedmont in the political regeneration, share likewise in that social and commercial career which had wrought so marvellous a transformation upon this little state. Most eventful were the years 1859 and 1860. They united the government and the nation, the army and the citizens, and reorganised the state on the basis of new ideas and new facts.

There is something remarkable in the *timing* of these changes. Had the war of independence been undertaken a few years earlier, it would have been attended by no lasting benefit. Napoleon crossed the Alps and fought Solferino precisely at the moment when Piedmont was ready to assume the reorganisation of Italy. This was the result of no nice calculation on his part. It was the doing of a higher Power; but the one thing fitted into the other: and thus, by regular stages, exhibiting the development of a well-arranged Providential plan, the country was rescued from slavery,

the sphere of liberty was widened, and the march of progress went on. Piedmont, which had employed so well the "one talent" entrusted to her in 1848, received in 1859 "five other talents" in the form of a vast increase of population and territory. Thus we find a law in the political as in the spiritual world, that "To him that hath shall be given."

The report of the Minister of Commerce, issued in 1862; and the report of the Chamber of Commerce of Genoa, issued in 1864,* show how rapidly the commerce of Italy is expanding, and how steadily its industry is developing. To crowd our pages with numerous details is not necessary; it will be sufficient that we quote a few of the leading facts.

The Italians are not insensible to the value of steam navigation. In its greater speed and punctuality, and in the power of entering or leaving port without being compelled to wait, as sailing vessels must, for a favourable wind, it possesses immense advantages. The Italians are most anxious to improve this arm of their commerce, and are making successful efforts in that direction. The steam navigation of the port of Genoa in 1858 amounted to 25 vessels, with a tonnage of 6,298 tons. In 1862 it had increased, as we learn from the government report, to 40 vessels, with a tonnage of 7,243. The same document states that so rapid was the increase of the steam navigation, that in 1863 not fewer than 39 steam vessels were constructed by the ship-building companies of Genoa, making in all an addition of 16,097 of tonnage to the

* *Relazione sul Commercio e l'Industria della Provincia di Genova al Signor Ministro di Agricoltura, Industria, e Commercio. Approvata, dalla Camera il 4 Gennario, 1864. Turin, 1864.*

existing steam navy. The total number of persons employed in the seafaring trade belonging to Genoa and the neighbouring ports of Savona, Chiavari, and Spezzia, in December, 1862, was 31,408. For the service of the coasting trade, the Italians contemplate a railway along the whole shore of the Mediterranean, and which, communicating with the lines that run northward and touch the Alps, will connect the Italian towns with the markets of London, Liverpool, Hamburg, and New York, the commercial centres of the world. So long ago as 1853 a transatlantic company was formed for trading with North and South America, and for instituting relations with Brazil and Montevideo. For these vast projects the patronage of the government was sought, and the government, viewing them as fitted to develop the industrial skill and commercial energies of the nation, willingly undertook to protect and foster them.

The extent to which the commerce of Genoa has already grown, and the rate at which it is increasing, may be judged of from the number of ships belonging to the port. The government statistics give the year 1862 as an example. In that year the arrivals and departures from the port of Genoa amounted to 18,656; the sum total of the tonnage being 2,149,096. The persons employed in the traffic numbered 204,604. Comparing this with the commercial operations of 1861, we find an increase of 335 ships, and of 163,386 tonnage; and taking the sum of the increase of the years 1861 and 1862, it amounts to 1,703 ships, and 602,405 tonnage—a figure which is little inferior to the average of the annual operations from 1814 to 1848: that is, the simple increase of these two years

was almost equal to the entire commerce of any one of the years of the period ending 1848.

Of the above tonnage, viz. 2,149,096, that of the steam navy amounted to 929,820, and that of the sailing vessels to 1,219,276. The navigation is further distinguished into coasting voyages in the Mediterranean, and long-sea voyages. The coasting trade employed a tonnage of 225,444, and the foreign a tonnage of 993,832. The tonnage of the cruising ships shows the rapid development of the internal trade of the Mediterranean. The national flag participated in this movement to the extent in sailing vessels of 2,433 ships entering, and of 2,508 departing. The foreign flag contributed 919 ships entering, and 913 ships departing. In this navigation the British had by far the greatest share, their ships being 206, with a tonnage of 49,827. Then France followed, with 156 ships, and a tonnage of 16,687. Austria and America came next, their ships respectively numbered a little over 90.

In steam navigation the Italian contribution was 1,269 voyages, in 44 steamers. The British are put down for 145 voyages, in 61 steamers; the French for 762 voyages, in 45 steamers. The steam contribution from the other nations is insignificant. The total of the navigation carried on under the national flag was 14,942 arrivals and departures, and a tonnage of 1,116,647: that is, about fifty-two per cent. of the whole. During the ten years which elapsed betwixt 1784 and 1794, only two American ships were seen in the port of Genoa—one solitary ship in 1788, and another in 1793—so untrodden was then the great highway betwixt America

and Italy, which a native of Genoa had been the first to open.

In the pages of the government report we can trace the growth of Italian commerce, as indicated by the imports and exports for the years 1858 and 1860. The imports from France into all Italy during 1858, amounted in value to 155,500,000 Italian lire (twelve millions four hundred and forty thousand pounds sterling). In 1860 the importation from France had risen in value to 183,600,000 lire. The imports from England into all Italy, in 1858, amounted in value to 116,394,466 Italian lire. In 1860 this importation had risen to 131,943,000 lire. From the United States the importation in value amounted, in the former of these two years, to a little above 20,000,000 lire, and in the latter year to upwards of 27,000,000. The importation from Austria showed a slight decrease in 1860 as compared with 1858. As to the products sent out of the country: the value of the exportation from the whole of Italy to France was, in 1858, 167,500,000 lire (above thirteen millions sterling); and in 1860 it was 173,300,000. To England, in 1858, the value of the exports from all Italy was a little above 61,000,000 lire, and in 1860 it was upwards of 68,000,000. The exports to the United States had risen during the same years from 20,000,000 to 25,000,000 lire. The exportation to Austria had declined from 73,000,000 lire in 1858, to 41,000,000 lire in 1860. This increase in the imports and exports of Italy will appear the greater when we reflect that her commerce is, as yet, confined to a few centres.

The chief articles comprised in the import trade of the peninsula are cereals, coffee, sugar, wine, spirits,

flesh, fresh and salted fish, oil, fruits, tobacco, cotton, iron, coal, and a variety of manufactured goods. The articles of export are much the same, with the exception of sugar, which does not appear in the list. Rice has come to be exported on a large scale to France, as also silk and skins. Meanwhile, for the accommodation of this expanding trade, the Italians are busied in the building of docks, the construction of warehouses for storing merchandise, and the laying down of railroads.

But all this is little compared with the far greater things which the Italians look for in the future. And what may they not reasonably expect with a sky so genial, a soil so fertile—"the land of Ceres and Bacchus," as it has been styled—a position so advantageous for mercantile pursuits, and with numerous lines of communication radiating from it on all sides, here traversing the sea, there crossing the mountains, and linking the peninsula with the principal marts and the chief trading communities of the earth? Already the Italians have preoccupied the future with great schemes. They purpose to plant colonies on distant shores, and to open new markets in remote hemispheres. The realisation of these great projects must necessarily be preceded by the establishment of a solid basis at home, in the development of their internal resources, and the completion of their political liberties. On this fulcrum only can they rest the lever of a world-embracing commerce.

The chief exports to the harbours of Italy are from Great Britain. She sends her coal, her iron, her machines, and, occasionally, still more important gifts, some of her skilled workmen, to superintend those manufacturing establishments which are rooting

themselves on the shore of the Mediterranean. We are not afraid that we shall teach the Italians soon to rival us. Nature has greatly diversified the products of the two countries as well as the genius of the two peoples. The destitution of Italy is great: everything by which the soil is cultivated, or the vine dressed, every tool of industrial and mechanical operation, is wanting in Italy, and must be had from us. Although we should quadruple the ships which convey our coal, our iron, and our machinery, to her shores, it is not during the present generation, nor perhaps during many succeeding ones, that we shall overstock Italy, and that the demand from abroad ceasing, we shall be constrained to blow out our forges and close our workshops. We observe in the government report a suggestion to both Italy and France to aim at creating their own industry, and not to continue to be dependent on Great Britain by looking to her for the supply of their wants. Salutory advice were it also practicable. France and Italy may certainly create industry on their own soil, but only to the extent to which nature has furnished them with materials. The iron-mine and the coal-field they cannot create. When the earth was arranged by its Maker, these valuable commodities were denied to the soil of France and Italy. Most impartial distribution did the great Creator make of his vast inheritance amongst his numerous family. To this nation he gave the olive and the vine, to that the coal-measure and the mineral bed, that all might be fully supplied by the reciprocal interchange of commodities, the surplus of one nation supplementing the wants of others.

CHAPTER XV.

THE INDUSTRY OF ITALY—ITS DEVELOPMENT.

MODERN civilisation is happily distinguished by the honour in which it holds labour. Christianity apart, this is the chief characteristic of the civilisation of our day, as compared with that of ancient times. The men of early days saw no dignity in labour. The idle and turbulent populations of Athens and Rome despised the artisan and the mechanic. To till the soil, to dig in the mine, to weave on the loom, they held to be degrading occupations. The profession of arms alone was honourable. The modern Italian republics, wiser than those who had gone before them, judged differently. If the soldier was the defence of the state, the labourer formed the basis of its power: if the function of guarding the products of industry and art was noble, not less noble were the skill and perseverance which had called them into existence. This was a juster estimate, and in accordance therewith men began to turn their attention to trade and commerce, and soon found that by these pursuits they enriched their own country and benefited other regions. If arms had made knights and princes, silk and wool now began to make bankers, lords on 'change, and kings of the sea: and henceforward, not only was the opinion discarded in the Italian

republics, that labour was degrading to a free man, but it came to be held that a profession was indispensable in the case of all who aspired to influence and honour in the commonwealth.

The industry of Italy declined with its liberty, and with its liberty has it revived. But Italy is only, as yet, at the beginning of the development of her all but illimitable resources. The uncertainty that hangs over its political future impedes meanwhile its industrial advance. The Italians are, moreover, miserably in want of tools. Here are a few instances. Not till a few years ago was a wheelbarrow to be seen in their country. Their railway embankments, containing millions of tons of earth, were formed by carrying the soil in little baskets on the head! Their ploughs are mostly of wood. Their gardens and fields are watered by a pole and bucket as in Egypt. Their carts are little boxes suspended betwixt two enormous wheels, and drawn by a rather imposing array of cattle—a horse, a mule, and an ass, to which worshipful cavalcade a bullock is often added. Their cooking utensils are almost all of earthenware. And even as regards those commodities which their soil so plentifully yields, or would yield under an improved husbandry—corn, oil, wine, cotton—the produce at this day is not great. The industry of Italy labours under two serious drawbacks which time only can remove. The first is the want of accumulated capital; and the second is the need in which its operatives stand of technical instruction in their various branches. In the northern provinces the artisans are beginning to be distinguished by their expertness; and the many waterfalls of the Apennines offer a compensation for the

iron and steam which Britain so abundantly possesses, and of which Italy is so greatly in need.

Let us state a few facts regarding the silk trade. It is amazing to reflect how apparently trivial the causes to which peoples may owe their prosperity and states their greatness. From an insect which feeds on the leaf of the mulberry, which spins from its own bowels a delicate fibre, and constructs therewith a tomb in which to die, have arisen, in good degree, the commerce and glory of Genoa. The silkworm, it may be said, has reared her palaces, freighted her ships, and clothed her population. Ever since its introduction in 1432 by the brothers Peroleri, the spinning and weaving of silk has been carried on in Genoa; the trade flourishing and declining with the vicissitudes of the state. At the beginning of the century it had reached its lowest, but now its revival is marked. Milan is the centre of the trade, the plain of Lombardy being excellently adapted for the rearing of the silkworm. I was told on the spot that during the July of last summer (1864) not fewer than ten thousand bags of raw silk were being daily sent from Milan, and transported across the Alps to be worked up in the looms of Lyons, of Great Britain, and of other countries. The Genoese Chamber of Commerce, in their report, while dwelling upon the competition which they have to carry on with France in this branch of industry, and the necessity that Italy should conquer in this beneficial rivalry, say, that all they need for the due development of their silk trade is capital, skilled and industrious workmen, elegant designs and purity of colouring. The first, they say, capital, will come in

course, and the last cannot be long absent in the land of Raffaello and Buonarotti.

- During the era of the Ligurian Republic, the cotton trade was not the least important of the industries of the state. Cotton was largely imported from Cyprus and other places in the Levant, and being spun on the wheels of Savona, it was worked up upon the looms of Albaro. Under the French empire a duty of 500 per cent. was imposed upon the importation of cotton. This tariff was prohibitory. The import ceased, the looms were stopped, and the operatives, left without labour, were left also without bread. The trade did not revive till 1850. The average importation of cotton from 1839 to 1849 did not much exceed 28,000 quintals. In 1851 it had risen to 86,453 quintals; in 1856 to 125,750 quintals; in 1860 to 134,816 quintals. The importation of raw cotton has quintupled in ten years; and this has been accompanied by a corresponding increase in the importation of cotton-thread and cotton-fabrics. In February, 1862, the workers in cotton, including spinners and weavers, were 16,000, and the looms 8,400, in the Genoese territory. The reform of the Custom House duties in 1860 was extending the cotton manufacture to Tuscany and other parts of Italy, when the contemporaneous breaking out of the American war checked the anticipated increase; but from this evil it is hoped good may arise, for the attention of the Italians must now be given to the cultivation of the cotton plant on their own soil, a result already in part realised.

Of the many fruit-bearing trees which flourish in Italy, the olive is not the least valuable. Each tree

yields an average annual revenue of five pounds to its proprietor. The olive exists in large forests on the shores of the Mediterranean, contributing materially, as every traveller knows, to the grandeur of the Riviera di Levante, by the rich masses of foliage with which it clothes the stupendous precipices which form that sublime coast. Tobacco and the sugar-cane are cultivated, but to no great extent. Rice is one of the staples of Italy, for the cultivation of which the plain of the Po is excellently adapted. The vine is everywhere, flourishing equally on the sunny banks of the Arno, and on the rocky brow of the Apennines. The importation of foreign wines into Italy has decreased by the large amount of six millions of francs. This decrease gives the measure of the advance in the cultivation of the home grape.

Yet more rapid has been the development of the railway system in Italy. Not to speak of subordinate branches which cross and recross, and begin to link together the provincial towns, three great trunk lines traverse the peninsula from north to south. The first descends along the western shore and halts meanwhile on the papal frontier—that fated line where all progress stops. Some portions of this line are not yet completed. When finished, the commerce of the Mediterranean will be diffused by it over Northern Europe, communicating as it does with lines which cross the Tyrol and run into Germany. It is a great feeder of the port of Genoa. The second line traverses the centre of Italy, starting from the southern shore of Como, and running by Bologna and Florence, it unites the *pianuri* of the north with the delicious vales of Tuscany. The third runs along on the east, by Ancona and the Adriatic

shore. Part of the vast commerce betwixt London and India will be diverted into this channel as soon as it is completed, thus placing Italy on one of the greatest of the world's highways. These railways have been executed at prodigious expense and toil. He who has seen the towering headlands which guard the Mediterranean on the west, and the mighty Apennine ranges which divide Bologna from Florence, can alone appreciate the greatness of the enterprise. Through the bottom of the mountains lies the pathway of the railway car in Italy. In the face of such mighty obstacles the undertaking would have been abandoned but for the genius and courage of Cavour. He went on when others would have recoiled. When money was wanted to tunnel another Apennine, he appropriated another monastery, providing for the monks elsewhere. The fathers shook their cowed heads; dreadful mutterings issued from the altar; the overthrow of works accomplished by sacrilegious means was confidently predicted, and in some instances the superstitious peasants were incited to fulfil these prophecies. But the man on whose head all these maledictions were showered went on undismayed; and now, if Italy has a few monasteries less, she has, in her magnificent system of railways, the basis of an almost boundless development both of her home industry and her foreign commerce.

All the great commercial nations of other days have possessed colonies in three of the four quarters of the globe; we might instance Portugal, Spain, Holland, France, and England. The last is not so much planting colonies, or *entrepôts* for her traffic; she is multiplying herself; she is creating empires in her own likeness over the face of the earth. The Italians are

fully alive to the advantage, indeed, the necessity of colonies, in order to that grand commercial future which they confidently anticipate. Their first acquisition, they feel, must be a certain small portion of their own soil which is still lacking—Rome and its surrounding territory; but already their eyes are fixed on a few vacant spots in distant regions which they purpose converting into *entrepôts*. The first is on the coast of Guinea, near the mouth of the Niger; the second is in the Indo-Chinese seas; and the third is on the Arabian Gulf. In each case Italy has wise reasons for her selection. Already she has a large trade with the Guinea coast and the Bight of Benin; in the Indo-Chinese seas her ships already begin to appear; and she anticipates a glorious commercial future, at no distant day, in the Gulf of Suez and on the shores of the Red Sea.

This revival of trade makes itself manifest at a glance, in the new face which all things begin to wear, especially in Northern Italy. It is seen in the quickened life of the towns. It is seen in the happier looks and better clothing of the people. It is seen in the construction of new buildings, the renovation of old ones, and in the higher cultivation of the soil. The transformation which has passed upon the region around Genoa, and the towns on the Ligurian coast, I have already described; but to be fully understood it must be seen. The huge palaces in the environs of Genoa, clustering on the grey Apennine, with old ocean at their feet, their gateways gone, their windows patched, their roofs sinking, their frescoes peeling off, and lizards running by hundreds amidst their dying olives and fig trees, formed such a scene as one might expect

to meet with amid the physical and social wastes of Turkey. But now the edifices, repaired, and painted afresh in those bright colours which harmonise so admirably with the vivid tints of the landscape, and contrast so finely with the rich foliage of the vine and the orange tree, rise in stately magnificence as at first. The scene no longer looks old and dying. The whole region lies suffused in the light of a bridal gaiety.

But perhaps the sharpest contrast between the past and the present of the Italian cities, is that which Milan presents. I visited the capital of Lombardy in 1851, and it seemed to me that I had never seen a more wretched place. In its streets I saw only a few shadows—for shadows rather than men they seemed—passing each other in silence, shunning each other's looks. They crept along with eyes doggedly fixed upon the pavement. Their cheeks were sunken, their eyes were hollow, their brow was clouded, and their limbs dragged heavily, as if iron fetters weighed upon them. In many of the lanes and alleys not a creature was to be seen; it seemed as if the plague had stalked grimly through the purlieus of the city, stricken their inhabitants, and closed their dwellings. And then there was a continual beating of drums and marching of soldiers, with cannon in all the piazzas, and a Croat as sentinel at all the public offices.

And yet the place seemed not made for sorrow. Milan was once a city of palaces, and had been the abode of the wealthy and the happy. Its houses were palaces still, although beggars now lodged where princes had aforetime dwelt. And then, around the city, what a noble plain, pouring out corn and wine in a profusion which might have made ten Milans prosperous

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And over that plain what a noble azure dome! And from that dome, what floods of light were rained upon the mulberries and vines, the orchards and fig-plantations of the plain. And then the goodly rampart, the glorious Alps, which enclosed this fair garden of Lombardy, defending its rich fruitage and its beauteous capital from the rude breath of the north. Here eternal spring had made its abode, and the serenity of the skies and the beauty of the earth seemed to vie with each other. Here, if anywhere, one might have looked for joy on every face, and happiness in every heart, at least, to all the extent to which earthly good can yield them; but no! sorrow like a cloud, thick and murky, had settled down upon the place. "Surely," said I, "of all the wretched cities on the earth, Milan is the most wretched." But alas! I soon found reason to correct my conclusion, for I was only then beginning my acquaintance with Italian cities, and the misery and despair with which Austria and the priesthood had filled these ancient seats of commerce, of wealth, and of pleasure.

I revisited Milan in 1861, just two years after its liberation, and a third time in 1864. I had never doubted the power of Liberty to work marvellous transformations on nations and cities. I knew that she could make the earth greener and the skies clearer; but the transformation which had passed on Milan in this short time I could not have believed, unless I had been, as I now was, an eye-witness of it. In the interval between my visits, liberty had visited Milan, and what a change in the capital of Lombardy! Liberty had filled its streets with the music of busy feet and the sunshine of happy faces. Liberty had replaced its rags with decent

clothing, and the former worthless merchandise of its shops with store of fabrics rich in material and elegant in design. The very houses looked younger, now that they were inhabited by free men. In short, Milan had become a populous and rejoicing city, as of old. It had come up from the region of the dead. For generations it had been as a "broken vessel," forgotten by a world which, in other days, had been enriched by its trade and adorned by its beauty. Now it begins to resume its legitimate place in the eyes of men, and to claim its legitimate share in all the business that is done under the sun.

CHAPTER XVI.

EDUCATION IN ITALY.

THE state of education in Italy, and the vigorous efforts of its government to dispel the dense ignorance which had overspread a land anciently the cradle of letters, next demand our attention. The government are deeply impressed with the conviction that intelligence must be the basis of the state's unity and strength, and that without education the Italians can neither keep what the past has given, nor realise what the future promises. They are labouring therefore to cover the country with schools. They have begun this work not a moment too soon. They find it a truly herculean one, but, having entered upon it in earnest, they are resolved to persevere, despite the obstacles daily thrown in their path by a priesthood, whose maxim has long been that "Ignorance is the mother of devotion."

For the facts I am now to state I am mainly indebted to the tables of Signor Matteucci, ex-Minister of Public Instruction, contained in his *Three Letters on Education*,* addressed to the Marquis Gino Capponi. These tables are compiled from the most authentic sources, and

* *Considerazioni e Proposte sugli Ordinamenti Scolastici ed Educativi. Lettere tre al marchese Gino Capponi.* Di C. Matteucci. Turin, 1864.

are the most recent and trustworthy information we possess on the subject of Italian education.

Let us first glance back. The retrospect of Italy since the sixteenth century is all darkness. A dense cloud overhangs the country, and shelters within its bosom a monstrous brood of evils. There was a feeble intelligence in Lombardy and Piedmont, but in the rest of Italy the vast majority of the inhabitants were left to grow up in brutish ignorance: they did not even know their letters. The few schools in the country were in the hands of the priests: so indolently and inefficiently were they taught, that the people applied to the teachers the name by which it had been meant to designate the scholars, *ignorantelli*. Even in the higher seminaries the teaching was old-fashioned and scholastic, far more akin to the age of Thomas Aquinas than to our own days. It consisted of a little Latin, a little philosophy, so called, and in practical branches no instruction at all, or what was as good as none. The sons of the noblesse were sent to Jesuit seminaries, or taught at home, their tutor being almost always a priest. We may judge of the amount of accomplishment they were likely to bring with them into society and business, deprived, as they were, of the wholesome and bracing influence of a university training. Reading little and thinking less, their antiquated maxims and bigoted notions rather increased through life than diminished. Manifesting strong sceptical tendencies, they yet, on the approach of death, grew suddenly pious, and in almost every instance departed this life "fortified" by the sacraments of the church. The young priests, taught at episcopal seminaries, had their understandings narrowed by an education exclusively professional, and by

their complete isolation from the laity. As regards the great mass of the common people, no intellectual or moral truth broke through the haze on their minds. Prodigies and the facts of science came alike to them. All these were equally credible, or equally incredible. They had lost the power of distinguishing between the prodigy and the fact. They were taught that it was part of religion not to think; that the highest exercise of piety lay in the annihilation of reason; and, to do them justice, they did their best to be pious. Such was the state in which the government of Italy found the country on its accession to power in 1860.

Matters may be supposed to have improved somewhat since the beginning of the century, but even at this hour the educational state of Italy, as presented in the tables of Matteucci, is sufficiently deplorable. The ex-minister of public instruction, founding on the census of 1862, gives us the per-centage of males and females able to read and write in the different provinces. His statement brings out the following results.

Of every thousand males in the old provinces and Lombardy, 539 were, more or less, able to read, and 461 did not know their letters. Of every thousand females, 426 could read, 574 could not. That is, throughout the whole population, about half were able to read.

In Emilia, Tuscany, the Marches, and Umbria, of every thousand males, 359 could read, leaving 641 who could not. Of every thousand females, 250 could read, 750 could not. A little over one-fourth only of the whole population in these provinces could read.

In Naples and Sicily, of every thousand males, 164 were able to read, 835 could not. Of every thousand

females, 62 could read, 938 could not. That is, in every hundred of the population in the Neapolitan provinces, about ten only were able to read.

These statistics Signor Matteucci finds ~~are~~ confirmed by the inscriptions for the military levy. Of males between the ages of five and eighteen, able to read, there are in the Neapolitan province only 134 in every thousand; and in Sicily only 130, leaving in every thousand 870 who do not know their letters.

Let us compare this with the number of ecclesiastics in Italy. And for what purpose were the ecclesiastics there, if not to teach the people? It is not necessary that we should go over all the provinces of the peninsula. Let us take the kingdom of Sicily as an example. There, as we have seen, only ten in every 100 of the population are able to read, and yet there the number of the ecclesiastics at the beginning of the century amounted, it is reckoned, to considerably above 120,000.*

Look at the sum expended in 1858 for the elementary instruction of the Italian population. That sum amounted to not more than 4,000,000 lire (£320,000) for the whole of Italy, with a population of 21,000,000. Compare this with the amount yearly expended in the more civilised states of Europe on elementary education. In France, in 1855, there were expended by the state on primary schools 23,000,000 francs (£920,000). The tax called *scholare*, paid by the non-indigent families for elementary instruction, produced in that year 9,000,000 francs, and increasing year by year it has now risen to 16,000,000. In the general balance

* *Italy and the Italian Islands*, by Professor Spalding, iii. p. 376.

of Prussia 22,500,000 francs are annually inscribed for the elementary schools. In England, the total expense for elementary instruction rose, in 1862, to 48,000,000 francs, that is, £1,927,000 sterling.

The Italian government, feeling the urgency of the case, immediately set about establishing elementary schools in all the communes. The progress of the work may be estimated by the sums voted for it in the various provinces. In 1858, as we have already stated, the inadequate sum of 4,000,000 lire, that is, £320,000, was all that Italy could afford for educational purposes. Now her communes are vying with each other in their liberality in this vital matter. Turin, which in 1848 expended scarcely 50,000 lire (£4000), inscribed on its balance sheet for 1864, 450,000 francs (£18,000). Milan in 1862 raised 395,000 francs (£15,800) for elementary instruction. In Genoa, the commune has expended 343,000 francs. Bologna almost 300,000 francs. In Romagna and the Marches there is no city of any importance where the authorities have not shown an awakening zeal in this cause. The province of Ravenna three years ago could afford only 45,000 francs; to-day they expend four times that sum. The commissioners of the province of Ancona had formerly only 34,000 francs to bestow on education; in 1862 they gave 126,652 francs. Much the same thing has happened at Forli, Perugia, and Ferrara.

Tuscany, Signor Matteucci says, has lagged behind; a result for which one is scarcely prepared, considering the high literary culture of its capital, and the general prosperity of the province. Now, however, Tuscany begins to occupy herself with the movement.

Of Naples and Sicily we have not yet spoken. The difficulty of procuring information regarding the exact numbers of those who are at present receiving primary instruction, is greater in these provinces: one thing, however, is certain, that since the establishment of normal and *magistrali* schools three years ago, the number of its elementary schools, both male and female, continually increases. So also do the evening schools. The condition of the masters is being greatly ameliorated. In the recently published report of a most deserving and laborious inspector, Di Gioannis, of Palermo, we read that the sum allotted in the communal balance-sheet for the years 1862-3 for the provinces of Naples and Sicily, was 191,310 francs; and that the pupils in Palermo had doubled in the course of a year. As regards Naples, the most populous city, and the most richly gifted by nature, in the kingdom of Italy, the advance is not maintained. In 1862 it voted for elementary instruction 274,217 francs (£10,968 14s. 2d.), and in 1863 not more than 240,994 francs. Naples, however, is the seat of another educational movement, distinct from that of the government, which imparts to the youth in its rapidly multiplying schools, instruction of a very superior kind, both secular and religious. I refer to the schools established by Signor A. F. Buscarlet, to which further reference will be made hereafter.

The reports of the inspectors on the studies, recently published, afford cheering indications of the progress of this movement. The salaries of the monitors and masters in the primary schools are being raised. This betokens a growing appreciation on the part of the Italians of the advantages of education, and an increase

in the number of those who avail themselves of it. There are now in Italy cities in which the salary of the schoolmaster is a thousand francs (£40) and upwards. Of this number are Milan and Genoa, and there are many instances in which masters are paid five or six hundred francs. This is no small sum for Italy.

To what extent does this system of education meet the necessities of the population? What is the number of the youth attending school? This is our next inquiry. We shall divide Italy into three great regions—the Northern, the Central, the Southern—stating the number of schools in each, the number of the children which attend them, and the relative proportion of the inhabitants to the pupils.

In the Old provinces and Lombardy, with a population of 7,106,211, there is a school for every 521 inhabitants. The total number of the youth, male and female, between 5 and 10 years, is 747,083; and of these the number attending school is 547,432, which is at the rate of one pupil for every 13 inhabitants.

In the Central region—the Marches, Umbria, Emilia and Tuscany—the population is 5,338,147. There is a school for every 1,407 of the inhabitants. The total number of the youth is 620,164, of which 127,654 attend the primary schools. This gives one scholar for every 42 of the population.

In the provinces of Naples and Sicily there is a population of 9,282,352, and a school for every 2,484 persons. The total number of the youth between the ages already specified, is 977,846, of which 126,116 attend school, being at the rate of one for every 73 of the population.

The schools are divided into upper and lower, and

their numbers may be stated as follows. There are 926 upper boys' schools, and 12,565 lower, in all 13,491 boys' schools. Of upper girls' schools there are 270, of lower 7,592, in all 7,862 girls' schools, giving a total of both kinds of schools for all Italy of Twenty-one Thousand Three Hundred and Fifty-two.*

Let us next trace the actual progress of education in Italy during the years 1861 and 1862, as shown by the increase of the schools and of the teachers. In the Old provinces there are in all 4,436 communes; of these 4,251 possessed elementary schools in 1861, and 4,329 in 1862, being an increase of 78 in the number of communes having schools. There was a corresponding increase in the masters and mistresses. In 1861 the masters in these communes amounted to 7,735, and in 1862 their number had risen to 9,053. In 1861 the mistresses amounted to 4,888, and in 1862 they had risen to 5,661, being an increase of 2,091 masters and mistresses.

In the Central region there are 1,072 communes. In the first year we find 753 of these having schools, and in the second year 914, being an increase of 161. In the same period the masters and mistresses had increased by 441.

In the Neapolitan and Sicilian provinces there are 2,213 communes. Of these, in 1861, not fewer than 2,023 had schools, and in 1862 twenty-four were added, making the number of communes having schools in these provinces 2,047. The teachers, male and female, had risen from 3,330 in 1861, to 3,549 in 1862,

* See as above, *Considerazioni e Proposte sugli Ordinamenti Scolastici ed Educativi. Lettere tre al Marchese Gino Capponi.* Turin, 1864.

being an increase of 219. It thus appears that in the year 1862 schools were opened in 263 additional communes, and that in the same year the increase in the number of teachers was not less than 2,751. The number of communes in the Italian kingdom is 7,721, and as in 1862 schools existed in 7,290 of these communes, it follows that only 431 communes were then without schools. Did we possess later statistics, we should be able to show that this destitution has now been in good part supplied.

The tables compiled by Signor Matteucci, show the number of schools and of scholars in all the leading provinces of Italy; but it is unnecessary to trouble our readers with these details; we select one or two as a sample.

The province of Turin, with a population of 924,209, has 1,578 boys' schools, attended by 48,545 pupils; 970 female schools, attended by 39,614 girls; being a total of 88,159 scholars.

The province of Genoa, with a population of 643,380, has 585 boys' schools, attended by 21,167 scholars; 285 female schools, attended by 12,164 girls; being a total of 33,331 pupils.

The province of Milan, with a population of 899,174, has 579 boys' schools, attended by 33,676 scholars; 469 female schools, attended by 27,677 girls; being a total of 61,353 pupils.

The province of Florence, with a population of 701,702, has 234 boys' schools, attended by 9,369 scholars; 99 female schools, attended by 6,872; being a total of 16,231 pupils.

The province of Naples, with a population of 877,120, has 126 boys' schools, attended by 4,487 scholars;

104 female schools, attended by 5,508 ; being a total of 9,995.

The province of Palermo, with a population of 538,519, has 112 boys' schools, attended by 3,694 scholars ; 12 girls' schools, attended by 879 ; being a total of 4,573 pupils.

From these statistical facts let us endeavour to present a general view of the existing condition of Italy as regards elementary instruction. In Piedmont and Lombardy there is one pupil for every 11 inhabitants. Liguria has one for every 17 inhabitants. Emilia, one for every 33 inhabitants. Sardinia, one for every 35 inhabitants. The Marches and Umbria, one for every 44 inhabitants. Tuscany, one for every 58 inhabitants. Naples, one for every 66 inhabitants. Sicily, one for every 108 inhabitants.

It is much that the government of Italy should have awakened to the unspeakable importance of having an educated country ; it is much that it should have projected a scheme for carrying instruction into every commune and every household of the land ; it is still more that, in the course of only four years, it should have advanced so far towards the realisation of that scheme ; still Italy has not yet reached the goal. Much remains to be done. The population of Italy is upwards of 21,000,000. This gives 3,000,000 of youth, between the ages of five and twelve, which ought to be at school. Instead of this number, the youth of both sexes at this day attending the elementary schools is only 1,000,000 ; that is, the number is only one-third of what it ought to be. And this proportion varies considerably in the several provinces. In the southern of the three regions into which we have divided Italy,

only one-eighth of the children, of age to attend school, are receiving elementary instruction, and seven-eighths receive none. In central Italy one-fifth of the youth attend school, and four-fifths do not. In the northern division of the peninsula four-fifths attend school, and only one-fifth are without instruction. In short, Italy instead of having only 21,000 elementary schools, ought to have 40,000 at least; and instead of 1,000,000 scholars, she ought to have 3,000,000 under instruction. Nor will Italy be abreast of other civilised nations till she has attained this point.

Signor Matteucci goes on to show, by a comparison of the educational statistics of the peninsula with those of other countries, how far Italy has fallen behind. In the Swiss cantons, and in the greater part of the states of Germany, the majority of the population can read and write. The same is true of Holland. In England and Wales the children of both sexes of age to attend the elementary schools amount to 2,655,777, of whom probably 2,535,462 are under instruction. There are, in England and Wales, 60,000 schools of various kinds. In Scotland, primary instruction is still more widely diffused. In France, where primary instruction has been enacted only since 1833, by the law of Guizot, there are 63,777 elementary schools, attended by about 4,000,000 of youth of both sexes. The emperor, when announcing this result at the opening of the Legislative Chambers in 1864, took occasion to say that his government did not view the goal as reached, or thought that their efforts ought to stop while there remained in France six hundred thousand children without instruction. How much less ought the government of Italy to relax its

efforts so long as in some of its provinces not more than an eighth of its youth are at school, and over the whole kingdom only one million instead of three are under instruction? Nor do we believe that the Italian government will pause in this good work. There is a wide-spread and spontaneous desire for education in the nation. All classes—government, the communal authorities, and the parents—are heartily co-operating in the effort to dispel the darkness which has so long covered their country.

But the paucity of schools and scholars is not the only drawback under which the nation at this hour labours. Italy wants school-rooms, airy and commodious. She wants dwelling-houses for the teachers. She wants improved machinery for distributing the national and communal subsidy, so as to aid the most necessitous localities, and at the same time evoke their own efforts. Above all, she needs better qualified masters and mistresses. The Italians have yet much to learn as regards the painstaking, punctual, day-by-day discharge of duty. A teacher on his way to school meets an acquaintance he has not seen for years: he cannot open school that day—he must spend it with his old friend; or he has some piece of business to transact, and so again his scholars get a holiday. The instruction given is often sadly lacking in the practical. A class in arithmetic will sometimes be found unable to do an easy sum in addition or in subtraction. Why? The teacher has been soaring into the heights of scholasticism, discoursing learnedly to his pupils on the essence of numbers, or the qualities of length and breadth. These pedantic aberrations, however, are more common in the higher seminaries.

And this leads to the remark, that the attendance in Italy at the lyceums, gymnasiums, and schools of art, is very small. It does not reach 30,000 pupils. One university, that of Bologna (the oldest in Europe), had, at its opening, in the twelfth century, nearly as many pupils as all these seminaries can boast. At present, one in every 66 of the Italian youth, in the grade to receive superior instruction, enters the lyceums and gymnasiums. In France twice this number attend these institutions. In Italy, in 1863, 1,600 pupils only passed the examination which qualifies for entering the universities. That is a number barely adequate to supply the government-offices, even though all had passed the examination; but the commissioners tell us that numerous candidates are rejected, and that it is rare to find a candidate who does not blunder in spelling, or the elements of geography and geometry, or who does not break down in working a simple sum in arithmetic. Were the examinations more rigorous, say the commissioners, not more than one in every ten would be found admissible.

But education must progress. Every year the government will require a larger number of *employés*, and these better qualified. Every year the advantages of education will be more clearly perceived. Improved methods of teaching will be devised; more liberal grants will be forthcoming for elementary instruction; and the lower will compel the higher seminaries to advance. "It is the one matter," said Jules Simon, speaking of the elementary school, "where a good government has the right and the duty to be prodigal."

CHAPTER XVII.

SUPPRESSION OF THE RELIGIOUS HOUSES.

WHEN the Italians, suddenly and roughly awakened by the storms which had swept across their country, had time to look around and survey their position, they found the prospect sufficiently startling. The body politic was covered from head to foot with grievous and cancerous maladies. There was one evil especially which called loudly for correction. An anomalous race swarmed in the country, and, having fastened upon the soil, held great part of it in their unprofitable and ruinous possession.

A deep gulf divided the class we speak of from the rest of the nation. Save the outward form, and the animal instincts, its members seemed to have little in common with their kind. Yet their wealth was vast as their numbers were great. Lands, houses, hoarded riches, all were theirs, and in measure so ample that their prosperity mocked the general poverty of the country; and yet the services which they rendered to the state in return were not apparent. "For what end do these persons exist?" "Is society bound to retain in its bosom a body of men who are devouring it?" Such were the questions which the Italians now began to ask.

"They have hands, but they handle not," says an

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inspired writer of the gods of the heathen. The same words may we apply to the class we are describing. "They have hands, but they *work* not." They did not till the soil, they did not dress the vine, they did not ply the loom, the deep they did not navigate. The mallet, the anvil, the spade, they piously eschewed. Not a farthing did they contribute to the state's wealth. They were born only to consume.

But these men, perhaps, were profitable labourers in the mental field, and by the toil of their minds, if not by the labour of their hands, enriched their country? Neither was this the case. Letters and arts they did not cultivate. Science and philosophy owed them no obligations; their mental was as great as their bodily indolence. The risks of the battle-field were no less sedulously eschewed by them. They were as sparing of their blood as of their sweat.

But these men devoted their days to the duties of religion. Where was the proof of this? They did not preach to the people; they did not instruct the young; they did not visit the sick; they did not comfort the aged. The business of their lives was to eat, and drink, and sleep; to wake at midnight, or at the first cock-crowing, and sing the praises of Mary, and, this edifying service finished, to go back again to their repose.

Not only were the lives of these men wholly without profit to the state, they inflicted upon it much loss and detriment. Their overgrown numbers thinned the ranks of industry; their excessive revenues impoverished the resources of commerce. But a yet deadlier injury did their pestiferous example inflict upon society. The shadow of the convent blighted the population on which it fell. Idleness, mendicancy, and vice, flourished

around its walls; and the cities and districts in Italy where the convents were most numerous, were, as every traveller knows, precisely the places where the poverty was the greatest. The paupers were in the direct ratio of the monks, for the latter devoured the alms destined for the former.

Awakened Italy immediately addressed herself to the remedying of this monstrous evil. It was well that political storms had previously thinned the ranks and weakened the power of these fraternities. Joseph II. of Austria had attempted their partial suppression, finding them the greatest impediments in the way of his reforms, but he failed. The wars that have since shaken Europe have made the task easier now than it was then. But even at this day the Italian government might have deemed the enterprise too hazardous had the state's necessities left it an alternative. Happily for the cause of Italy's regeneration, alternative there was none; great works stood still; trade languished; bankruptcy approached; and the peril that menaced the state could be staved off only by throwing into the yawning gulf the vast revenues of the monastic establishments, so profitless to the industry and so noxious to the morals of the nation.

The sub-Alpine government of Piedmont had tried the experiment on a small scale in 1855. About two-thirds of the religious houses were suppressed, and their revenues devoted partly to the augmentation of small livings, and partly to defraying the expense of great national undertakings. But what a storm this sacrilege, for so it was deemed, evoked. From every altar and convent came the mutterings of monkish wrath. These were but the prelude to the louder thunders of

the Vatican, which now broke over the little kingdom of Piedmont. The tempest, however, rolled past in innocuous noise. Cavour, the prime originator of these bold measures, prosecuted them with unabated vigour. He was then engaged on the great railway between Turin and Genoa. The work was difficult, for he had to bore through several concentric ranges of Apennine. Million after million was needed. Cavour turned his eyes on all sides, but nowhere, save in the convents, could he find the funds for the completion of his great scheme. He did not hesitate. The railway was, in due course, finished and opened; and instead of the calamities which were to attend an undertaking, promoted by means so impious, the prosperity of Piedmont has gone on increasing from one day to another.

The government of Italy has since applied the same measure to the whole of the peninsula, the Papal States excepted, where the frock and the cowl are still as common as in the palmy days of monkery. In 1863, a Project of Law was presented to the Chamber of Deputies for the suppression of the religious corporations, and the management of their property by an ecclesiastical board. This Project has now become law; and by that law the various orders of *religieuses* have been suppressed, their goods declared the property of the state, and placed under a board to be administered for such uses as parliament shall determine; the fathers, in all their varieties, with the modifications to be afterwards stated, were dissolved as religious corporations known to the law, and at the same time restored to all their rights as members of civil society, and, last of all, lest they should come to want, turned suddenly adrift, unskilled in any indus-

trial or professional occupation, a pension was bestowed on each, regulated according to his age and rank in the convent. In this law we have an industrial and social revolution, the importance of which it is impossible to over-estimate. Italy has recovered an amount of territory a hundred times more valuable than the much-coveted Papal States. Millions of profitless wealth have been turned into the channels of industry. The sanctified examples of vagabondage and beggary, the bane of the country, have been got rid of. Innumerable fountains of moral pollution have been dried up, and a mighty hindrance to ulterior reforms has been taken out of the path of Italy.

Let us look at the number of the religious houses in the peninsula. This will give us some idea of the magnitude to which the evil had grown, and the courage required to grapple with it. The documents from which we quote,* and which embrace a complete series of the state papers relating to the suppression of the conventual establishments, we owe to the kindness of a member of the parliament of Italy. These documents, printed, but

* *Progetto di Legge relativo alla Soppressione di Corporazioni Religiose e disposizioni sull' asse Ecclesiastico.* Camera dei Deputati. Sessione 1863. No. 159.

Relazione della Commissione composta dei Deputati, &c. Sul Progetto di Legge presentato dal Ministro di Grazia e Giustizia e dei Culti. Sessione 1863. No. 159—A.

Resoconto dell' Amministrazione della casa Ecclesiastica: presentato dal Presidente del Consiglio dei Ministri, Ministro dell' Finanze. Sessione 1863. No. 215—A.

Progetto di Legge. Soppressione delle decime Ecclesiastiche. Sessione 1863. No. 158.

Relazione della Commissione, Composta dei Deputati Panattoni, &c. Soppressione delle decime Ecclesiastiche. Sessione 1863. No. 158—A.

not published, and of course accessible only in the way we have mentioned, contain full and most trustworthy information touching the religious houses, the number of their inmates, and the amount of their possessions.

There are eighty-four orders or congregations in Italy. This number does not include the smaller societies affiliated to the principal orders. These have different names in the different provinces; each has its own special objects. They render Italian society a kind of mosaic. Italy has been well named the Levitical State.

Of the above eighty-four monastic orders, eighty possess property, and four are mendicant. These last can own nothing, and live by begging. Of the eighty propertied corporations, thirty-eight are men, and forty-two are women.

The number of convents or religious houses existing at the period of the suppression was 2,382. Of this number 1,724 held property, and 658 were mendicant. These establishments were further divided into male and female, or, as they are termed in England, monasteries and nunneries: the former numbering 1,506 houses, and the latter 876.

The value of the property possessed by these convents was estimated at forty million lire.

These orders are further distributed into 15,494 monks, and 18,198 nuns; 4,468 lay brothers, and 7,671 lay sisters: of monks of the mendicant orders there are 13,441, and 3,967 lay brothers: making a grand total of 63,239. Nor does this figure, large as it is, express the whole body of Italian monasticism. The conventual establishments of the Papal States, and the religious houses in Piedmont previously suppressed,

are not included in it. When we take these into account, we cannot reckon the monastic corps of Italy at less than 100,000.*

What was to be done with this huge and hideous overgrowth? It was vain to think of merely pruning it; it must be cut down: and government proceeded vigorously to lay the axe at its root. The first article in the Project of Law presented to the Chamber of Deputies, on June 18th, 1864, was as follows:—"That all the houses of the religious orders, and all the congregations, regular and secular, shall cease in the kingdom as associations recognised by the civil law." The second article proposed, "That the members of the suppressed corporations shall acquire the full exercise of their civil and political rights from the moment of their leaving the cloister."

The Commission which was appointed to consider and report upon this Project of Law† altered the above articles to the following effect, namely, that the religious orders should be no longer recognised by the state, that their houses should be suppressed, and their goods placed under an ecclesiastical board, and that the members of the suppressed corporations should acquire their civil and political rights from the date of the publication of the law.

But the monks and nuns were not turned adrift without suitable provision for their maintenance. To all

* *Progetto di Legge relativo alla Soppressione di Corporazioni Religiose e disposizioni sull' asse Ecclesiastico.* Sessione 1863. Camera dei Deputati. No. 159.

† *Relazione della Commissione composta dei Deputati Ara, de Donno, &c., sul Progetto di Legge presentato dal Ministro di Grazia e Giustizia e dei Culti.* Sessione 1863. Camera dei Deputati. No. 159—A.

below the age of sixty a yearly pension for life of 500 lire (£40) was granted; and 250 lire to every lay brother and lay sister. To those of greater age a more liberal pension was voted. Provision was also made for the servants of the suppressed monks, according to their age and length of service. A variety of chapters, canons, and titular ecclesiastics were also suppressed, for which still more liberal provision was made.

The actual result of this law has been to sweep away more than half the monasticism which weighed upon Italy. It took effect only upon the propertied corporations, and spared the mendicants, a numerous body. The mendicants would have shared the fate of the others, that is, they would have been suppressed, had the state been rich enough to pension them. This its resources did not permit, and accordingly the *Capuccini* are still to be seen, with bushy beard, funnel-shaped cowl, three-knotted rope, and wallet on back, perambulating the towns and rural districts of Italy, begging. But from this time forward their ranks can receive no new accessions; and the race must gradually die out. Should the number of the brothers in any convent decrease below six, provision is made that they be drafted into some other building, and the one vacated by them taken possession of by government. It is now nothing uncommon in Italy to see buildings, recently used as convents, converted into barracks, asylums, and schools, or serving other purposes required by the public exigencies. To see the soldier standing sentinel where aforetime none but holy men, in cowl and girdle, might enter, and to hear lessons conned where chaunt and orison were wont to be sung, provokes, on the part of

certain classes, many a sigh over the declining piety of the age.

Already, after deducting all burdens, such as pensions to the monks and supplements to the parochial cures, the revenue derived from the conventual property leaves a considerable surplus for state purposes. This sum will increase from year to year now these estates have been brought under more enlightened management. Nothing could be more wretched than their former cultivation. They exemplified the power of neglect to undo all the gifts of nature. Here is an instance: the domains of the Archbishop of Pisa run for miles along the shore northward from Leghorn, and extend for leagues into the interior. They comprise a region which was one of the most fertile in ancient Italy. In our day they exhibited a dreary spectacle of swamps and barren lands, alternating with limited patches of cultivation. A poverty-stricken territory truly! These lands have been appropriated by the state, the government engaging to pay to the archbishop a yearly sum, equivalent to the rent he has been wont to receive for them. The government will see to their proper cultivation, and the hope is confidently entertained that in a short time their yearly revenue will be five times what it is at present.

By this arrangement the archbishop will be none the poorer, and the country will be greatly richer. The same may be affirmed of all the appropriated domains; for the government are now empowered to reclaim the ecclesiastical lands on condition of paying to their holders a sum equal to their present rental. These will pass under the plough; the law of seed-time and harvest will resume its reign upon them;

and their growing rentals will, year by year, yield a larger surplus to the necessities of the state.

The Italian priesthood, fruitful in devices, have had recourse to sundry expedients for mitigating—they despair of averting—the calamity with which this law threatens them. Novices who had not completed their term of novitiate, were entitled to no pension on leaving the convent. But in very many of the religious houses the archbishop, “out of his inexhaustible compassion,” writes the *Perseveranza*, “granted a dispensation to these novices, enabling them to take the vow before they had completed the term of novitiate prescribed by the rules of the cloister.” As a consequence a great many nuns will be found entitled to a pension when the day for closing the convent arrives, who otherwise would have had no claim whatever on the state’s beneficence.*

There were even greater abuses perpetrated, to serve ends which were held to justify the means. The sisters of a certain convent granted a lease of a house belonging to them in Milan for twelve years. The rent was paid them, not for one year, but for the whole period of the lease, and as it was hopeless to think of making the sisters refund the moneys they had already pocketed, the government had nothing for it but submit to lose the eleven years’ rent. In another convent in the Milanese territory it was found that the sisters had made away with the entire capital of their house, under the pretext of gifts and restitutions; and so cleverly had the thing been done that the government could not recover its own property.†

* *L'Unita Italiana*, September 29th, 1864.

† *Ibid.*

But despite these evasions the law will effect its great purpose. In Naples alone, according to the *Conciliatore* of that city, not fewer than eleven convents of monks and six of nuns were suppressed during the first half of 1865. And as regards the whole of Italy, a full half of the monkish brood has already been swept away; and if the Mendicants still linger on the scene, it is with the sentence of extinction suspended over their order. A few years more and the last man who in Italy has worn sandals and borne wallet will be carried to the tomb, and the country completely freed from an incubus which has for ages crushed it.

Is it the country only which the suppression of the convents will benefit? Will it not benefit still more the wretched captives shut up in them? What is a convent? The abode of love and holy meditation. So has it been affirmed. The laws of our common nature gainsay the affirmation. He who has ordained that a plant cannot live without light and air, has, by laws equally irresistible, made it impossible for virtue to exist when it is not exercised. "Man in society is like a flower blown in its native bed." The world, as God has made it, with its numerous relationships and inter-dependencies, affords hourly scope for the exercise of all the virtues—for pity, for benevolence, for trust, for courage, for loving-kindness. In the convent all these occasions are absent: there is no moral light and air; and to expect love to blossom in a convent, is like expecting colour in the darkness, or life in a sepulchre. The heart, finding nothing without, turns in upon itself, and becomes the seat of foul desires, or of evil passions.

But why reason from the laws of the human con-

stitution, when there are so many facts at hand telling us what convents have been always and everywhere. But the other day Henrietta Caracciolo opened the doors of the Neapolitan cloisters, and bade us look with our own eyes.* Her womanly delicacy has partly concealed the hideousness which she dared not nakedly discover; still no reader of ordinary penetration can fail to see the awful sufferings of which these places are the abodes, and the shameful wickedness enacted within their walls. Her description reminds us of the picture which St. Paul draws of the heathen world, "without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful." Instead of a paradise of purity and love, the cloister, as here drawn, truthfully as we are assured, is a pandemonium, the inmates of which hiss and sting like serpents, and torment one another like furies. And then the vow which makes their sufferings immortal, and leaves them hope of escape only in the grave! Never was there on the earth slavery more foul or more bitter; and never was there decree more humane and merciful than that by which Italy declared that this bondage should no longer disgrace its soil or oppress its children.

* *Misteri del Chiostro Napoletano, Memorie di Enrichetta Caracciolo de Principi di Forino-ex-Monaca Benedettina Firenze. 1864.*

CHAPTER XVIII.

EFFORTS FOR A CIVIL MARRIAGE LAW.

IN another direction is the Italian nation, at this hour, struggling to enlarge its liberty and shake off the grasp of Rome. We refer to the efforts now making to pass a bill, declaring that marriages contracted simply according to the rites prescribed by the state, and without the benediction of the church, shall be accounted valid. What is wished, in short, is to restore marriage to its place as a civil right, and to strip it of its sacramental and ecclesiastical character as solely and exclusively a church privilege. The bill has not yet passed through parliament, but it is confidently believed that it will do so next session.

In a country like ours, where marriage is a civil right, and all may marry who please, one does not see at first what a fetter on liberty marriage may be made. The Church of Rome decreed that marriage is a sacrament. In passing this decree she took her stand at the very gates of life; she planted her forts beside the cradle of society.

If marriage be a sacrament, then no one but a priest can administer it; and he, of course, will administer it to none but to those who are in communion with the church. If marriage be a sacrament, the church has a perfect right to prescribe the conditions on which it is

to be enjoyed. She may withhold it from an individual, or from a nation. When interdict smote a realm, all the sacraments were withheld, marriage among the rest. The dogma that marriage is a sacrament placed society beneath the feet of the priesthood.

There was no evasion: neither the consent of the parties nor celebration by the civil authorities could constitute marriage. That in which the essence of marriage consists, according to Rome, was wanting, the intention of the priest, to wit; and so the marriage was no marriage. In the judgment of the Church of Rome there is not a married person upon the earth save those whom her own priests have joined in wedlock; and the entire Protestant world has, in her eyes, been sunk for ages in concubinage. So at least we may infer from the pope's encyclical, and the outcry raised in Italy by the priests against the civil-marriage laws. "Society," they shouted in full chorus, "is being overrun by infernal evils and horrible disorders."*

The opinion of Rome on this, or any other question, is nothing to us; but it is something to the Italians. In lands under the sway of the church, her dogmas carry civil effects. The Italians have wisely resolved therefore to wrest this formidable weapon from the hands of the church, by restoring marriage to its place among civil rights. In the Roman law marriage was a civil right; it was long so regarded in Christian times, and was held to be valid if contracted simply according to the rites prescribed by the state. Its validity was made to rest on the sole footing of the consent of the parties. So did the fathers of the Council of Florence

* *L'Opinione di Torino*, July 22nd, 1864.

place it.* But abuses crept in; clandestine marriages multiplied; a remedy was loudly called for; and the church took the whole legislation on the subject of marriage into her own hands. When the Council of Trent met, numerous complaints, chiefly from France, were carried to that assembly. The fathers, after lengthened deliberation, recognised the validity of clandestine marriages already contracted, but condemned and declared null all such marriages in future, the main ground of nullity being the absence of the element of proof. A clandestine marriage could not be proved by law, and was held as not having taken place, according to the old maxim, "*Non esse et non apparere idem est in jure.*"

But the Council of Trent, further, elevated marriage to the rank of a sacrament, and being a sacrament, marriage properly and strictly comes under the law which regulates all the other sacraments of the church, baptism excepted, viz., that it is valid only when celebrated by a validly ordained priest, that priest acting with intention. The preponderating power of the Papacy in Italy so wrought henceforward as to withdraw marriage from the jurisdiction of the civil authority altogether: it became wholly an ecclesiastical affair, and no one could marry but with the consent of the church. This fetter, forged at Trent, the Italian nation now wishes to break. It is the brand of its priestly vassalage, and it must be wiped out.

The bill brought into the Italian parliament, and which we hope will have become law before another session has passed, is to the effect of permitting persons

* *Romanus Catechismus: De Sacramento Matrimonii.*

to be married according to the civil form, or according to the ecclesiastical form, or according to both forms, by superadding the church's benediction to the civil ceremony. Drawing the principles of their policy in this, as in other matters, from Great Britain, the framers of the bill hold that the *essential thing* in marriage is the consent of the parties, and that the presence of the notary in the one case, and of the priest in the other, is indispensable only in so far as it furnishes proof that the marriage has taken place.

Thus we behold Italy toiling at the work of undoing the fetters which Rome so silently and craftily tied round her limbs in the dark ages. It is no easy task ; for, of course, the priests violently oppose all these changes, more especially such changes as the suppression of the convents, the alienation of the ecclesiastical property, the introduction of civil marriages, and the subjection of the priesthood to military levy, branding these measures as impious, and menacing all concerned in them with the church's anathema and God's, so that the superstitious peasantry are frightened, and led to fight against their own emancipation. For often the moral and mental imbecility engendered by slavery ranges the enslaved on the side of the enslaver. But in these measures what do we behold ? We see Italian statesmen unconsciously labouring at the task of pulling down the pillars of the pope's kingdom. It was by framing dogmas such as these, and making them be received as divine, that Rome acquired her dominion. That dominion can only be wrested from her by exploding these dogmas, and by lodging in the convictions of society of the world the antagonistic truths. Dispel the dark-

ness, and Rome's fetters undo themselves. This is what Italian statesmen, somewhat unconsciously, are doing. Each of the reforms we have specified is a dogmatic revolt as well as a legislative aggression. Each is based on some great moral or spiritual axiom. To give an instance. In the preamble of the bill for appropriating the property of the conventual establishments, the grand truth is set forth, that the state and the church have different and distinct spheres; that temporal things belong to Cæsar, and spiritual things to God. What a glorious doctrine to be proclaimed in Italy, and embodied in the acts of its parliament. Against the dogma that the church is the one infallible teacher, Italy places the antagonistic dogma that it is the duty of the state to provide for the instruction of its youth, and on that maxim she founds a national educational scheme. Against the dogma that property given to the Papacy is for ever inalienable, Italy places the dogma that the state can take back what it gave when the end for which it gave it is no longer served; and on that maxim she sweeps away monkery, and rescues her soil from the grasp of the church. Against the dogma that marriage is a sacrament, Italy places the antagonist doctrine that marriage is a civil right, and so rescues society from the power of the priest. Thus the battle is maintained by opposing dogma to dogma; and as each new doctrine triumphs, another domain is recovered to liberty, and another fetter is thrown off from the human mind. Whether Italian statesmen mean it or not, every measure they pass, although formally in the political and social domain, is really a blow struck in the ecclesiastical sphere, and unsettles some one or

other of the foundation-stones of Rome's spiritual edifice. Nay, more than this, every such measure is not only a fetter struck off, it is a barrier reared between the national mind and a return to that slavery in which it has lain, for ages, so pitiably and helplessly engulfed.

Thus have we briefly sketched the great movement now in progress in Italy. We have contemplated that movement in its intellectual, its industrial, its educational, and its social aspects. These are the material substructions on which, at a future day, there will rise in Italy a glorious spiritual temple. May "the Lord hasten it in his time."

CHAPTER XIX.

FIESOLE—ITS MONKS—TOMBS OF THE MEDICI—
SAVONAROLA.

BEFORE passing to the other great theme which is still to occupy us, let us walk out into the luxuriant beauty and radiant sunlight of Italy. In the presence of its glorious landscapes we shall forget for awhile the evils which have so long made this land their abode, and which are now fighting so hard a battle to retain possession of it. What a fulness of light in the sky! What a richness and depth in the colourings of the landscape! What a majestic repose on the mountains! Images of tranquillity and glory crowd into the mind: the ear seems to catch the echoes of that Voice which pronounced over the newly-arranged earth, "It is very good." And we are carried forward in thought to the time when a redeemed earth shall shake off the "curse," and nature shall put on her robe of unsullied virgin beauty.

Glorious is Italy! yet it is the glory that appertains to a ruin. The emotion it awakens is but the deeper and more complex on that account. There is room for the imagination to work. You have to restore the land. Fair, surpassingly fair, must Italy have been before the night overtook it; but when that night shall have passed away, and Italy shall lie bathed in the

dews of her second morning, then what beauty will be hers!

We are on the banks of the Arno, amid the domes and campaniles of Florence, gazing on that glorious wall of hills which encloses the delicious valley in which nestles the city of the Medici. At a little distance, on the north of the city, is a small hill which fixes the eye. It is the gem of the landscape. It stands forward from the chain of the Apennines. In shape almost a perfect cone, it rises garlanded with vineyards, and clumps of forest trees, and sparkling villas. Lovely is that hill at all hours, but especially lovely towards evening, when the purple shadows gather round it, and it begins to wear a deep ethereal, spiritual beauty. This is Fiesole. Let us walk thither.

Issuing from the Porta Pinti the landscape bursts suddenly upon us. Its rich, quiet, voluptuous beauty—what a contrast to the narrow, burning, crowded street we have just left! How unlike the landscapes of one's own country: how thoroughly Italian, or rather, how truly Tuscan! The tall cypress tree, the festooned vine, the grey olive wood, the painted villa, the finely moulded mountain, and, above all, the pure crystalline light, so freely rained from the skies, and diffusing such a resplendent glow over the landscape!

But we must ascend higher before the full glory of the valley will disclose itself. At this level we are buried in loveliness. The path climbs the hill, winding between garden walls overtopped by the acacia and the cypress, and mantled by the vine, whose luxuriant boughs, like that spoken of by the patriarch, run over the wall. Now we are mid-way up the ascent, and pause to survey the scene beneath us. The valley, as beheld

from hence, seems one vast vineyard and olive-wood. Thousands of cypress trees, sprinkled over it, stand up like monumental pillars. A glittering line of silver runs gleaming through the valley, and indicates the channel of the Arno. White villas, in hundreds, gleam out in the deep azure of the plain. And then the purple Apennine, in the north, towering into lofty mountains, in the south sinking into those gentle elevations from whose summit Galileo was wont to watch the stars; in the west, opening out into a far receding vista, and permitting a glimpse of those mighty peaks which rise around the Gulf of Spezzia; while in the east, far away, and seen across intervening heights, are the blue ridges that border the Adriatic.

Here, too, the city we have left behind us, buried in the luxuriance of the plain, fully comes out into view, and permits the true magnitude of its many noble monuments to be seen. Higher and higher rises the dome of Brunelleschi. As it towers above the roofs of the palaces of Florence, above the domes of its many churches, above the majestic cupola of San Lorenzo, above the tall and richly ornamented campanile of Giotto, it attests for itself, without challenge, the distinction of being the characteristic feature and crowning glory of the Italian Athens.

We pass under the walls of the villa of Lorenzo. What a delicious retreat in which to spend the lovely evenings, and forget the cares of government and the tumults of the city. Sorely dilapidated are now its terraces, alcoves, and garden walks; but what glorious memories cluster round it. Here scholars of the east, youthful disciples from our own island, and

the learned men of Italy, were wont to congregate round their princely entertainer. They would prolong their converse on letters and philosophy till dusk had hidden city and dome and cypress tree in the vale below, and brought forth the stars in lustrous splendour in the firmament overhead. This villa was the very cradle of the Renaissance. It was the centre of that intellectual and literary glory which, radiating over Europe, heralded the coming of a day of more blessed light than any that literature, or science, or art had ever shed. Alas! that to Italy that morning was turned into the shadow of death.

Threading the zigzags, we soon reach the summit of the hill. Fiesole bore upon its top an Etruscan town ere yet one stone had been laid upon another in the city of Florence. The old city, now dwindled to a few edifices ranged round a quadrangular piazza, occupied the shoulder or lower abutment of the hill, while on the west the rock towered up, and offered a prominent site for the temple, which was here dedicated to Bacchus, appropriately so, if the excellence of the vine that covers the surrounding valleys merited, as surely it did, some such acknowledgment. On the site of the temple is now a Franciscan convent.

Entering the convent gate, accompanied by my two daughters, and standing a pace or so within the threshold, a most unusual hubbub seemed all at once to break out within. Three or four monks came hurrying along the corridor, alarm on their faces, and indulging in violent gesticulations. When surprise and consternation permitted them utterance, they intimated to us that it was forbidden to ladies to enter the convent. Apologising, we hastily withdrew,

and in an instant the calm which had been so suddenly broken reigned once more within the conventual walls.

I was rallying my family on the scandal they had caused, and the panic into which they had thrown the good fathers, when an aged monk, who looked the patriarch of the monastery, approached me, and with kindly courtesy invited me to enter. The good father led me in, and bidding me make the round of the establishment, he left me to myself. Passing through a long corridor, I found myself in a paved courtyard, quadrangular in form, with the cells or chambers of the monks on all sides, and in the centre a well of living water, whereat the monks of many generations had drunk. I saw at a glance the whole arrangements of the monastery. Simple and without adornment were the walls, but the building had one striking feature. The western side of the quadrangle was pierced with a large window, and through it was seen a glorious vista of vine-clad valleys, cypresses, and blue hills, bathed in golden light. It was like a glorious painting hung up upon the walls, and enlivening the sombre interior of the monastery, only it was vaster and more dazzling by a hundred times than any which pencil of artist ever created.

Stepping out at a back door, I found myself in the garden of the monastery. It was poorly dressed. It contained a plot of vegetables, and three or four rows of vines. Being vintage time, the monks were gathering the fruit. The rest of the garden was covered with wild grass, interspersed with crocuses and daffodils, clumps of dwarf oaks and *lignum vitæ*. The boundary wall of the enclosure on the north side was formed of

the old fortifications, and, standing on them, one looks down into the deep valleys which part Fiesole from the Apennine range, richly clad with vine and fig tree, their white villas embowered amid cypress and acacia groves.

Retracing my steps, I came suddenly upon the monks, who had left grape-gathering and betaken themselves to more exhilarating sports. They had commenced a sham-fight, and were wrestling vigorously with one another. Brown frocks and scapulars were tossing in air; shaven crowns were glancing in the sunlight; naked ankles and sandaled feet were freely displayed; and the figures of the monks bent and rose as the tide of battle swayed to and fro. It was an attitude in which I had not chanced to see the good fathers before, and I stood to admire it. Many of them were young men of twenty-five or thirty years of age. They had thews and sinews that would have done honour to our sturdiest ploughmen; their faces certainly were not more intellectual: and, having neither plough nor spade by which to give vent to the exuberant spirits with which nature had blessed them, what better could they do than just what they were doing. But unhappily it was discovered that a stranger was watching the fray, and in a twinkling it was at an end, and the grape-gathering was resumed with even more earnestness than before. One of the lads—fathers I ought to say—good-naturedly came running after me with a cluster, and I thankfully accepted it, that I might be able to say that I had eaten of the vine of Fiesole. The berry was small, but the flavour good.

The old father who had led me in rejoined me at the door, and we walked together to the extremity of

the platform on which the monastery stood. He was somewhat below middle-size; his form was attenuated, and his brown frock hung loose about him; his features were sharp, but mild; the wrinkles on his face were getting deep; the eyes twinkled with that unsteady brilliancy which belongs to age; an air of melancholy invested the whole person: so much so, that I felt a touch of pity for the old man.

In answer to my inquiries, he told me that he had seen seventy-five years; that he had worn the habit (touching his frock as he spoke) from early youth; that there were at present twenty-five brothers in the monastery; that Fiesole had not been his first dwelling—that he had been in other monasteries (to which he pointed with his finger) in the plain around, but that these being now closed, he had come to where I found him, in consequence of the convent-suppression law. He told me, further, that he had read many books in his time, some on philosophy, some on geology and history, and others on theology; and, to do him justice, his face bore an air of intelligence not usually seen among the inmates of these monasteries. I ventured to ask him whether he had read one book—the Bible. The question seemed to be not an agreeable one: and although he replied hesitatingly in the affirmative, it was with an air which forbade further questioning.

Till a quarter of an hour previously, I had not been conscious that such a being as the old man who stood before me existed. In a few minutes I was to part from him for ever; and yet he had awakened in me no ordinary interest. Changes how many had he witnessed during his pilgrimage of threescore and fifteen years! Now, last and greatest of all, he had heard the

death-knell of his order rung out. Monkhood was being borne, with himself, to the tomb; and to him how near that tomb! Often had he seen the seasons revolve in the earthly paradise in which he lived. He had seen spring go forth, many-coloured with her blossoms; he had seen autumn hanging her purple clusters on the bough; and winter tipping the Apennine with her silver. One or two revolutions more, and then he should sleep his long and last sleep with all his predecessors of Fiesole. As he stood before me, with worn frame, thin lip, and beseeching eye, I asked myself what I could do for him. The small gratuity I offered him, he declined, on the score of the vow of his order. What else could I do? Through the fast falling shadows of his night, could he descry a coming morning? It would have gladdened me to think that he did.

A friend of the writer's visited Fiesole a few years ago, and entered into conversation with one of the monks respecting the origin and antiquity of the monastery and its buildings. "Their first founder," said the monk, "was a person of the name of Bacchus." "And who was this Bacchus?" inquired our friend. "Oh," replied the monk, "he was a worthy abbot, who flourished here long ago, so long ago that no one can now tell the year."

We descend Fiesole, and re-enter the gates of Florence. Mark that dome on the right; it is inferior only to the majestic cupola of Brunelleschi. Beneath its roof the princes of the house of Medici are sleeping their last sleep. We have seen their villa; let us pause before their tomb. It would seem as if their glory had descended with them into the grave; for we know not if palace of living monarch could compare in grandeur

with the chapel in which their ashes rest. As if marbles were nothing worth, the chamber is a-glow with chalcedony, jasper, and all manner of precious stones. Its polished walls reflect like a mirror. Tablets of bronze record the titles and virtues of these once proud rulers of Florence, and statues of marble preserve their features, from the sagacious countenance of the elder Cosmo, the founder of the house, to the inane, drivelling face of the last of his line.

And Savonarola, where is his tomb? The tomb of Savonarola! A tomb is for the dead. Savonarola lives! It is the mortal whose ashes we enshrine in marble, and whose deeds we commit to bronze; the immortal needs neither cenotaph nor monument. The Medici are dust. Savonarola, like a mighty presence, overshadows Florence. His majestic figure stands boldly out before the eyes of his countrymen. It grows larger and loftier every year; and his spirit begins to stir them more powerfully even than when his eloquent voice rung in their piazza, thundering against the arrogance of popes, and proclaiming Rome to be the Babylon of the Apocalypse.

In the great library of San Lorenzo I was shown Savonarola's Bible. Its broad margin is all written over, in a small, elegant hand. The monk had evidently been a diligent student of the Scriptures. He was burned in 1498, on the Piazza della Gran' Ducca—the light of his martyr-pyre nearly blending with that of the dawn of the Reformation. After his martyrdom, the followers of Savonarola were accustomed to come secretly and kiss the spot where the flames had licked his blood. This fact coming to the knowledge of the reigning duke, Pietro di Medici, he bethought him how

he could put a stop to a practice which gave him great annoyance. He had recourse to an ingenious expedient. On the fatal spot he erected a statue of Neptune, with a fountain falling into a circular basin of water, and sea-nymphs clustering on its brim. He thought that he had now done with Savonarola, and that the world would soon forget him. Not so soon. The efforts of the duke to obliterate all recollection of the spot and its tragedy did but the more indelibly fix them in the world's memory. There they are, publicly notified to this day ; and the visitor, in every coming age, will be able to turn to the spot, and say, "There was planted the stake which gave deathless life and endless fame to Savonarola."



CHAPTER XX.

RETURN OF THE GOSPEL TO ITALY—ITS THREE GREAT
EPOCHS, 1789, 1848, AND 1859.

At the opening of the sixteenth century the Reformation appeared at the gates of Italy, as at those of every European country, and summoned the nation to conflict in the present, to glorious victory in the future. Once had Italy been ruler of the world; twice had she been the mother of civilisation and art; a yet higher destiny did the Reformation put within her reach. It offered to her the leading place in a movement which embraced the emancipation of the human race, and the full establishment of a kingdom destined, not like that of her own Cæsars to pass away, but to last throughout all ages. Italy did not know her hour. She closed her doors against the light, and for three centuries she has sat in darkness.

The nation now fell under the dominion of Spain, and the period extending from the beginning of the sixteenth to the opening of the nineteenth century is, perhaps, the gloomiest in its annals. No great name, no glorious deed, relieves the darkness of that era. From the Escorial satraps went forth to govern, or rather to rob and desolate the country. The institutions which the middle ages had bequeathed to it were put aside. The rights of its cities were swept away. The

Spanish viceroy and the popish bishop came in the place of all other authority and rule. Its commerce and agriculture fell a sacrifice to tyrannical imposts ; its revenues were drained to fill the empty exchequer of Madrid ; and the flower of its youth were carried off to perish in the wars of France and the Netherlands. Better a thousand times had Italy dared the stake.

Rotting in indolence and vice, or pouring out its blood in spasmodic and fruitless efforts to recover that liberty which had passed away with the Reformation, and which neither tears nor blood could recall, Italy dragged out a wretched existence till the end of the eighteenth century. Now again there stood at her gates, and at the gates of all the popish countries, another messenger. But this time the herald bore not the olive branch of peace, as in the sixteenth century. The sword of judgment burned in his hand, and his coming was with the iron tramp of war. A young Italian having removed to Paris a little while before the breaking out of the French Revolution, and having there studied the military art, returned to his native land at the head of the French armies. He burst open the gates of Italy, dethroned her kings, and chased away her armies. Having inflicted fearful carnage upon her, he retired, leaving her open to the entrance of those principles which the state had put down at the period of the Reformation. The first appearance of Protestantism in Italy in our times, dates from the era of the Napoleonic wars.

And even when it did return, it was not as a *religion*, but as an *industry*. Under this guise did it steal back, as it were, into the country, fearing that were it dis-

covered, it would be seized, and a second time bound to the stake. Small bodies of Protestants from France, from Switzerland, from Germany, knowing the advantages which Italy offered, and profiting by the free institutions which Napoleon had set up at the sword's point, settled in a few of the Italian towns. Following the business of bankers, merchants, traders, and hotel-keepers, they established themselves, mostly, in the great cities of Lombardy, or in the commercial towns on the Adriatic and the Ligurian shore. They introduced manufactures and trades. The products of their industry transported across the Alps, and exposed in the markets of their several countries, originated a feeble commerce, which was yet a mighty boon to Italy, showing her sons, too ignorant or too proud themselves to discover the lesson, what benefits they might reap from a due development of the commerce and the agriculture of their native country. In truth, it is to Protestantism, mainly, that Italy owes the industrial prosperity which she is now beginning to enjoy.

Of these foreign communities, some few settled in Italy prior to the Napoleonic era. Venice early admitted Protestant merchants to a share in her trade. The Queen of the Adriatic loved the church, but she loved commerce more ; and her liberal or latitudinarian politics were expressed in the motto, *Siamo prima Veneziani e poi Christiani*.* Leghorn, the gate of Tuscany, followed the example of Venice, and made free of her port those men who, though heretical in religion, were skilful, honest, and enterprising traders. In this city, so early as 1607, regular religious services

* "First Venetians, then Catholics."

were established by the Dutch and Germans; and under the princes of Lorraine their congregations remained unmolested. About a half-century later the Protestant merchants of Venice united to hold regular religious services, the government interposing no obstacle. But in other towns of Italy—such as Bergamo, then the principal seat of the silk trade, Turin, the capital of Piedmont, Genoa, its seaport, Florence, Naples, and Palermo—it was not till after the commencement of the present century that Protestant congregations might be formed, and worship be celebrated.

Even then the privilege was tolerated rather than conceded. Of all the Protestant churches in Italy, that of Venice alone was acknowledged by the government; and even this recognition was attended by some limitations. The pastor was incapable of celebrating mixed marriages, and he was forbidden to instruct Roman Catholics, or to receive them into communion with his church. The churches in Leghorn and Florence enjoyed some few privileges, but had no legal status whatever. They were ever under the surveillance of the government, and much at the mercy of the mob, the humour of the prefect, and the zeal of the curé. The other churches in Italy were regarded by their respective governments as simply assemblies for domestic worship. Their places of meeting were viewed as ordinary dwelling-houses, and their pastors as private individuals. The actions of the Protestant chaplain had no more weight in the eye of the law than those of any other foreigner. He enjoyed the same protection which they did, but not more; and he was equally amenable to the regulations of the police, who might, at their pleasure,

permit him to remain in the country, or any day might send him orders to depart.

Still, with all these drawbacks and limitations, the implied toleration extended to Protestants, in the eighteenth century, was no small boon. The gospel was preached, the sacraments were dispensed, and those souls in which the heavenly life had been begun, could here find the bread by which it was to be sustained. It was a further advantage that schools for the instruction of the young, who otherwise might have lapsed into Romanism, were established in connexion with these congregations. The poor were cared for, the sick were visited, marriages were celebrated according to the Protestant rite, registers were provided for Protestant families, and cemeteries for Protestant dead. Moreover, journeymen, arriving from Switzerland or from Germany, almost always without a Bible, exposed to a thousand temptations, and in imminent danger of becoming even worse than the native population, might find here, if they chose to seek it, Christian counsel and Christian society. The majority of such persons, alas! were borne off by the swelling tide of fashionable vice upon which they fearlessly cast themselves, and were seen no more; but a few were rescued. If more was not accomplished—if the light shone not with sufficient steadiness and brilliancy to open dark eyes—it was owing, not so much to any hindrance or persecution on the part of government, as to the want of a living Christianity, and, in many cases, of vigour where there was life, and the difficulty of bearing up against an all-dominant superstition and an all-prevailing godlessness.

But the year 1848 was approaching, when war was

to be heard knocking a second time at the gates of Italy, and calling into existence upon her soil a more powerful Christianity, with wider means for diffusing it over the land.

We come to the second great epoch of this wonderful history—the revolution of 1848.

The revolution of 1789 had opened the gates of the Alps for the entrance of the Protestantism of Northern Europe. The revolution of 1848 opened the doors of the Waldensian valleys, and brought upon the scene, to mingle in the conflict, the representative of that church which Paul had found in Rome on his first arrival in that city.

Shut up within her valleys—at once her asylum and prison—groaning under a load of political and social disabilities, and sorely blighted by French infidelity, the Waldensian church had long slumbered. But the revolution of 1848 was as the cry at midnight. At the hearing of that voice she arose and trimmed her lamp. The same political tempest which overturned the thrones of her oppressors rent her fetters. The revolution of 1848 freed her in a single day from all her disabilities. The constitution granted by Charles Albert contained an express toleration of the worship of the Waldenses. It now began to be seen for what end Providence had brought them through centuries of fearful persecution; and that, while they neither had nor could have any mission in the world of politics, or in the world of commerce, they were, as events had shown, the predestined pioneers of the evangelisation of Italy. They abode during the appointed time within their mountains: the allotted period had now expired. God had passed by in the whirlwind, “rending the moun-

tains, and breaking in pieces the rocks ;” and, like the prophet at Horeb, recognising the steps of their King, and obeying his call, they came forth, and stood in the door of their now opened prison. Holding aloft their newly-trimmed lamp, whose oil had not been spent, and whose light had not gone out through the long centuries, they made ready to carry it through the length and breadth of the land.

But as yet it was only Piedmont that was opened to the evangelistic operations of the Waldenses. They attempted, no doubt, to extend their work beyond the frontiers of their native territory. Aided by Christians in Great Britain, they sent evangelists to Florence; but they were instantly checked in these endeavours by the political reaction which almost immediately set in. Of the numerous free constitutions which the year 1848 had brought into being, one only contained the grant of religious toleration. That one was the constitution of Piedmont. And it is a noticeable fact that the only constitution which survived the reaction of 1849, and is in existence at this hour, is the constitution of Piedmont. All the rest have perished. And why was this Piedmontese constitution preserved? The King of Piedmont and the people of Piedmont were not a whit more liberal than the rest of the Italians, but their constitution contained in its bosom the toleration of the Waldenses—in fact, it gave liberty and the gospel, and therefore Providence watched over it, and has now placed the whole of Italy under it.

But meanwhile an arrest was laid upon the advance both of liberty and of the gospel. A delay of ten years—from 1849 to 1859—was interposed. This delay

was essential to the ultimate progress of both religion and liberty; it was as necessary as winter is in the year. Without it liberty could not have been saved. Had all Italy remained open, all Italy would have been wrecked; for although the government of Piedmont was strong enough to resist the reactionary tendencies of its own state, it would not have been strong enough to resist the reactionary tendencies of all the Italian states combined. And as regards those states that fell back into bondage, they learned in that school some lessons altogether indispensable to liberty at a future day, and especially to union under the crown of Victor Emmanuel. Piedmont, moreover, had an opportunity given it of trying, on a small scale, those reforming experiments—as convent suppression and similar measures—it has since adopted on a large. And the Church of the Valleys, long unused to freedom, and long a stranger to evangelistic work, had time to acquire the courage and the practical skill so much needed in the novel circumstances in which she now found herself. During these ten years she prepared evangelists; erected churches in Turin, in Genoa, in Pinerolo; she planted stations in Alessandria and other towns; she collected funds; and in various ways perfected her machinery, in unconscious anticipation of the wider field about to be opened to her.

We come to the third epoch:—In 1859, the drama which had stood still for a whole decade, began again to go forward. Once more it is the cannon which opens to the gospel its wider field of action. In the spring of this year the war of independence, undertaken by France against Austria, in Italy's behalf, broke out,

and passed, as passes the thunder-cloud of the Alps across the plain of Lombardy, from the banks of the Po to the Adige; and scarce was the blood of its three great battles dry before Austrian Lombardy, Tuscany, Modena, Parma, and great part of the Pontifical dominions, had annexed themselves to Piedmont. Nor did the matter end here. The brilliant campaign of Garibaldi in Sicily and Naples followed. The sword of the hero, or rather the unseen Power which marched before him, routing armies, and making kings flee, added Southern Italy to the magnificent kingdom of Victor Emmanuel. The peninsula now came under that one constitution which contained in its bosom a grant of toleration to the Waldensian church; and now that church is beheld in possession of the whole of Italy as her field of labour. All is given to her, from the Alps to Etna, one wretched spot alone excepted, in the centre of Italy, "where still doth sway the triple tyrant." Now, surely we may say, began to be fulfilled the prophecy—for so we may venture to style the sublimest ode of our sublimest poet—of Milton, written with the groans of the slaughtered Waldenses ringing in his ears.

"Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints
 their martyr'd blood and ashes sow
 O'er all the Italian fields
 that from these may grow
 A hundredfold."

Who that contemplates this plan, advancing step by step, progressing with such regularity and majesty, can doubt that it was the Divine mind which contrived it, and the Divine hand which executed it? The end is not yet; nor do we know through what new

wondrous evolutions, through what scenes of terror and of mercy, the end may be reached ; but it most surely cometh, and that end is a fully emancipated and purified Italy. But it is affecting to think that when man has consciously and of purpose taken part in this plan, it has been to oppose it. The idea on which Providence has proceeded, has manifestly been that of rooting out the Papacy as the source of all the woes of Italy. The idea on which man has proceeded, has been that of retaining the Papacy as the centre of Italy's unity and the source of her glory. Three times has this grand error been committed. Once after the long wars of the era of 1789, when the monarchs of Europe restored the Papacy ; a second time after the revolution of 1848, when the Papacy was again restored ; and now, a third time, when the kings and statesmen of the continent are at this hour planning to retain the Papacy by labouring to reconcile it to the new condition of things in Italy. It is a two-fold picture which we are called to contemplate. On the one side is seen Providence steadily working to bring Italy out of the darkness ; on the other side is seen Italy as steadily turning back into that darkness. Beneficent, surely, as well as omnipotent, is the Power that directs the affairs of the world. Before that Power would we lowly bow down, giving thanks that, by steps unfathomably wise and sublimely grand, he carries forward his plan, nor once turns aside, whether in compliance with the weakness of those that would aid, or the wickedness of those that would oppose the accomplishment of his purposes.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE BIBLE, THE COLPORTEUR, AND THE EVANGELIST.

THE battle of Solferino, fought in 1859, made a red gap in the ramparts of despotism and superstition. At that gap the Bible entered Italy. Scarcely had the cannon's boom died away, when lo! in the midst of the nation was the Sacred Volume. It looked like a prophet come down from heaven, or rather come up from the sepulchre, to reveal things long hidden from the eyes of the sons of Italy. Some there were who welcomed the messenger, and listened to his teaching. That messenger cried aloud, in this land of graven images, "God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

At the head of Italy's reformers, then, we place the Bible. In 1861, 32,000 copies of the Scriptures were circulated in Italy; in 1862, 25,000 copies were circulated; and in 1863, 28,000: making in all, during these three years, a circulation of 85,000 copies of the Word of God in Italy. The number at this hour must be considerably above 100,000, not including a large body of religious literature in the shape of New Testaments and tracts.

Here was the sowing of seed which is now, in many instances to the beholder's surprise, springing quietly

up. Ever and anon events bring to light, in some rural district, in some secluded village, in some city lane, or in some mountain glen, a disciple, or a little company of disciples, whose existence no one suspected. It is as when one gazes on the dark night sky and suddenly there is a rift in the cloud, and lo! a group of stars. Who made known to these men the Saviour? Whence had come the living water of which they have drunk? Has some celestial visitant carried to them the good tidings? No; some chance, as it seemed, but, in reality, a sovereign and merciful Providence had sent the Bible to them, and in the midst of their darkness a great light shone suddenly upon them.

Next after the Bible, amongst the agencies of Italy's evangelisation, is the colporteur. Unobtrusive and unofficial, the colporteur is permitted to pass where the evangelist would be stopped, and to enter at doors which would be shut against the preacher. He is the pioneer of the pastor. His labours are great, but the curé sometimes unwittingly assists him. Hearing of the colporteur's arrival, the priest hastens to ring his bell, and assembling his parishioners, tells them that the heretics have invaded their town, bringing with them the devil's books, which they must not buy, nor even touch, under peril of eternal damnation. Going a step further, the curé sometimes purchases a few copies of the Bible, and carrying them to the public piazza, there burns them. The people thus advertised of the character and mission of the stranger who has appeared amongst them, crowd round him, begin to buy his books, and the disposal of his whole stock is now a matter of little difficulty.

Possessed of the Bible, these people retire, singly it

may be, or in twos and threes, to an olive wood, or a river's brink, or to a private room, to read the strange book. They open it timidly and mistrustingly. It is found to have a strange power. It says nothing of saint or Madonna; it is silent on penance and purgatory; its readers can see on that page only One—the Son of the Blessed—the compassionate, the merciful. They continue to read; the book searches their hearts, it responds strangely to the wants and wishes of their inmost nature; they begin to feel the burden of sin; conscience is awakened; and now the evangelist is sent for to expound the way of life more perfectly to them.

The evangelist is the third in order, for usually he comes in the wake of the Bible and the colporteur. Invited, he arrives in the city; he procures a *locale*; the disciples—half-a-dozen or a score—assemble and listen. A second and a third time they assemble, and now the matter comes to the ear of the priests. The pulpits begin to thunder: the *Capuccini* are greatly agitated; they flit from house to house, inflaming the people; they look grave, as if pestilence had entered the town—and, in truth, they would rather it had been pestilence than heresy; they set the bells ringing to exorcise the devil: thus the fervour of their devotees is roused, and when the converts hold their reunion in the evening a crowd collects, in which the monks and lower clergy mingle, and a riot ensues.

The citizens now come to know that the gospel has reached their town; curiosity is awakened, and the attendance becomes greatly larger. The authorities, although they do not, or cannot wholly, suppress the rioting, prevent the shedding of blood, and the meetings, with their growing attendance, are continued.

Without the protection of the law, often tardily and hesitatingly given, though less so now than formerly, the evangelisation of Central and Southern Italy were an impossibility. What with the rancour of the priests and the superstition of the masses, every spark of light would be trodden out in a few days. But as it is, the "drum ecclesiastic" is a help to the evangelist. It draws many to the conventicle who, but for the pulpit diatribe and the street riot, would not have given a thought to the matter. But after awhile curiosity subsides, the attendance thins, and those only remain whose hearts the gospel has touched. The station seems to be dying: it is in reality taking root: from this time begins the real growth of the little church. Such is a true picture of the beginning and progress, in almost every instance, of the evangelical stations in Italy.

It only remains to be mentioned, under the head of evangelistic agencies, that there is scarcely a section of the church in Great Britain which has not its representative in this field. The first place among churches labouring in this cause is due to the Waldensian Synod. This is Italy's historic church. Its presence forms the link between the evangelisation of the first century and the evangelisation of the nineteenth. The action of this venerable church is the guarantee that the present reformation is not a sectarian one, is not even a Protestant one formally, but an evangelical one. It is Italy's return, not to Calvin and the *Institutes*, but to Christ and the Gospel.

The next place is due to the Italian Evangelical Union. Yielding to the not unnatural reaction from the iron organisation of Rome, this body deems it to be its duty meanwhile to stand somewhat apart, and to labour to

evangelise without reference to any church organisation. It embraces some names held in high esteem in England, and it has been honoured to win souls to the Saviour. We heartily wish an abundant blessing upon its labours, not doubting that the work, as it advances, will, by its own power, correct misapprehensions, cure alienations, and gather all its friends around it. Our first desire is to see a church in Italy; that church, when it has come into existence, will wisely, and, under Divine direction, determine what the form of its government shall be.

Many churches out of Italy take part in this good work, and send either men or money. It is a work in which every church in Christendom may well take part, for it is a work in the issues of which all churches are destined to suffer a common defeat or to reap a common victory. Christendom, which has suffered so severely from the apostacy and fall of the Italian church in bygone ages will share in the blessings to be enjoyed at its restoration to liberty, and life, and light.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE EVANGELISATION—ITS RADIATION FROM FLORENCE—
WALDENSIAN COLLEGE—BATTLES FOR TOLERATION—
TRIUMPHS.

Does the silent but powerful influence which is creating a new Italy before our eyes proceed from one centre or from many ? This is the question which is suggested by the first glance over the wide field on which we are now entering. Italian evangelisation has found for itself three main centres—Milan in the north, Naples in the south, and Florence in the centre. Let us speak of each of these in turn—the innumerable facts which press on our notice cannot otherwise be reduced to order.

And first of Florence. It is sufficiently remarkable that the same city on the Arno which was the cradle of poetry in the thirteenth century, the cradle of the Renaissance in the fifteenth, should in our day have become a cradle of the evangelisation. First Dante : next Cosmo and Platonism : now a mightier than either—the Gospel. The movement in Tuscany existed before the revolution of 1848. It dates from the opening of the Scotch church in Leghorn, under the pastoral care of the Rev. Dr. Stuart, in 1845. From this time a small company of British Christians began to translate and circulate among the

natives of Tuscany, tracts on religious subjects. These sowers were casting a little seed into the soil which seemed like iron, while the heavens were as brass, when suddenly the sky became overcast, and the storm of 1848 burst upon Italy. It passed rapidly, bringing in its train a few months of quiet, which were diligently occupied by these evangelical labourers. In 1849 the old despotism returned, and set itself to extirpate the evangelisation which had sprung up in its absence, in which it recognised its formidable opponent. The little band of Tuscan converts were thrown into prison, but they remained faithful to the gospel. They were next threatened with death, which the law had now provided as the punishment of heresy; still they refused to apostatise. The persecution continued, but the number of the disciples increased. An extract from a letter dated Florence, and written in 1849, brings these confessors vividly before us. "They possess," says the writer, "Christian fervour, simplicity of faith, readiness of speech, an outpouring of soul in prayer, and an unworldliness, beautiful, very beautiful, to witness, and such a knowledge of Scripture! They are all shopkeepers and artisans." Such, with little variety, was the history of the ten dreary years that followed, till the cannon was again heard in Italy, ringing the knell of that dynasty which by this last grievous abuse of its power had sinned away its day of grace.

Now comes a great change. The war of 1859 had vastly extended the area of constitutional liberty; and the Waldensian church, looking from her mountains, and seeing the land open, ventured down from her abode of ages, although timidly, and much misdoubt-

ing that political sky in which the clouds had so often returned after the rain.

At its meeting in May, 1860, the Vaudois Synod resolved on the step of establishing its college in Florence. In the autumn following two professors, MM. Revel and Geymonet, with their families and eight students, set out from La Tour in the valleys, and settled in the capital of Tuscany. From the glens of the Cottian Alps to the City of Cosmo, it was not, as was said at the time, "a step, but a stride." The liberality of a few Christian friends had opened for them the Palazzo Salviati, the former residence of an archbishop of Florence, and this magnificent structure now became the head-quarters of their operations. Coming from this spot, the Vaudois evangelist will no longer present himself to Italy as a stranger. Educated here, he will speak the tongue of Italy as Italians love to hear it spoken. Thus the church of eighteen centuries and of thirty persecutions has planted herself where she can best perform that work which no other has so good a right as she to undertake.

Under the spacious roof of the Salviati palace the Waldenses found room for all the agencies of their mission. One part of the venerable structure they converted into a college, with its class-rooms; another part they formed into a church, elegant, and capable of containing from three to four hundred hearers; another portion they set aside as dwelling-houses for the professors; a fourth they destined for schools, and a fifth for the Claudian printing-press, which was now brought from Turin, and set to work in the old literary capital of Italy. The purchase money of the building was four thousand pounds; the alterations and repairs

cost two thousand more : but so greatly has property risen in value since Florence became the capital of the kingdom, that were the purchase to be made to-day it could not be effected for less than three times that sum. This measure, which gave a material foothold to the evangelisation, was owing mainly to Dr. Stuart.

But do we dream, or is it a reality which our pen has recorded ? The church of the Vaudois, so long chased as a partridge upon the Alps, in the capital of Italy ! teaching, evangelising, and printing by the very side of the throne and parliament, and filling the land with her doctrine : while the Church of Rome—that haughty defiant church, which called Italy her own, and which Europe was not big enough to contain—has dropped out of the kingdom of Italy, and from the physical and moral desert in which she finds herself, makes her voice heard in alternate wailings and maledictions ! What a bitter mortification is hers ! That hated rival which she laboured for ages to destroy she sees planted in the midst of the land, and growing up under the shadow of the throne, while she has been cast out. What a wonderful providence ! What a righteous retribution !

The Waldenses, when they came down from their mountains, sought not a conspicuous post, but a great and difficult work. That work they accepted with all its responsibilities. Their mission, they felt, was to evangelise from Mount Blanc to Mount Etna. Let us run our eye over this vast field, and mark their various stations which constantly multiply. The sight is like that of their own Alps at dawn, when the mountain tops, catching the first ray, stand up like pillars of fire, above the gloom that still covers the valleys. So do

points of blessed light begin to illumine the night of Italy.

The Valleys have not been abandoned. Being still the seat of the Waldensian church, with its college and schools, they are the main nursery of the missions at Florence. The students trained in classical learning at La Tour, are in due course transferred to Florence, there to receive their theological education, and, after ordination, to be drafted off to stations or congregations in Italy. The number of students in the Salviati at Florence ranges from a dozen to a score. This, of course, is a number utterly inadequate, if the urgent claims of the work are to be met. Every now and then there comes an application for an evangelist from some village or town; but there is none to be had, and the opening is lost. These applications would be still more numerous should the political problem find a solution favourable to liberty. For this, eventually, it behoves us to be prepared; and nothing could more effectually serve the cause of Italy's evangelisation than the adoption of well-considered means for increasing tenfold the number of students in the Salviati.

The church, with its sabbath and week-day services; the schools, with their hundred pupils, are valuable accessories to the theological hall; but it is of the Claudian Press—so named from Claude the good Bishop of Turin—that we would more particularly speak. It is a well of truth undefiled, opened in the city of the Medici. The works which have issued from this press have been such as are particularly adapted to the wants of Italy. It has sent forth a stereotyped edition of the Bible with references; and

surely it was in foresight of some such awakening as the present that one of Italy's sons was moved to prepare, three centuries ago, one of the purest and most elegant versions of the Bible in any language. To the Bible of Diodati no objection can be taken as Protestant. Besides the Scriptures, fragments of the native religious literature of Italy, in the sixteenth century, have been published. The works of Paleario, escaping the inquisitor's ravages, are a second time instructing Paleario's countrymen. But the greater part of the issues from the Claudian Press are works of British origin: selections from the writings of our Reformers and Puritans—the Pilgrim's Progress is as great a favourite in Italy as it is beginning to be in India and China; M'Crie's "Rise and Suppression of the Reformation in Italy;" Spurgeon's Sermons; Newman Hall's "Come to Jesus;" Puaux's "Anatomy of the Papacy;" and many others, including works especially adapted for the young. Last year the Claudian Press sent forth 25,000 copies of the New Testament, 10,000 copies of the Pilgrim's Progress, and 60,000 copies of the *Amico di Casa*.*

For the circulation of this stock of evangelical literature there are two hundred and fifty agents, eight depôts in the chief towns, not including the Bible depôts, and smaller depôts in the rural districts. The creation of such a body of Christian literature is a service which cannot be over-estimated. Its full value will be seen only when some new crisis arrives to shake Italy out of her torpor, and make her sons sensible of their moral and spiritual wants.

Of old time, when the earth of Egypt brought forth by handfuls, the food was gathered, and laid up in

* See note at end of chapter.

storehouses. For what purpose? To feed the inhabitants of the narrow valley of the Nile? No; to feed the necessitous of all lands in the approaching famine. In the seventeenth century the theological soil of England brought forth by handfuls. In no other age of the church has so overflowing and golden a harvest been seen. The printing-press laid up that corn in storehouses. For what end? Merely to feed the inhabitants of our own isle? No; but to supply the world. And the day is not distant when hundreds of translators, and thousands of printing-presses, will be seen toiling to sow that seed-corn over all lands.

Before leaving the work of the Vaudois in Florence, let us look in upon one of their congregations. On the evening of Sunday, the 25th of September, the writer worshipped with the Italian congregation of that city. The place was a long, narrow hall, into which you stepped right from the street. The ceiling was a series of low-browed arches. At the farther end was a platform, on which stood the preacher. Running right and left from the platform were transverse aisles, giving the building the form of a cross. The congregation might number two hundred; they were mostly men of humble life, artisans and tradesmen, with a few of the middle classes. Their dress—for the Sabbath suit, like the Sabbath itself, is less common abroad than at home; their close-cropped hair, which brought out some fine heads; their dark eyes, and earnest and animated facès, gave them a less devout, but a much more interested appearance than would have been seen in a congregation at home. They leaned towards the preacher as if to drink in every word; they carried their Bibles in their hands, and

turned up every text referred to ; a lesson which they have learned from the priests, whom they found, in almost every instance, misquoting. The preacher's topic was, "Christ or the Priest?" He showed that Christ was a person and not a system ; that in him centred all truth ; and that the believer found in Christ pardon, justification, eternal life, in short, all he needed. Then turning to Christ's rival, the church or priesthood, he asked his audience whether they would be content to go to that quarter for these blessings. An indignant "No!" was instantly shouted out by several of his hearers. He then proceeded to grapple closely with Romanism. He had the earnest air of a man who feels himself fighting, not with a theory, but a great living system, standing before him, meeting him every hour of every day, and, by its idolatrous rites, confronting and affronting that Saviour whose sufficiency he had been announcing. This part of his discourse was marked by alternate strokes of humour and of keen cutting irony. Now a broad smile would kindle on the faces of his hearers ; and now a perceptible murmur of applause would run through the assembly. The concluding hymn came at last to relax their keen tension of mind. It was sung in a way to thrill one. Congregational singing forms no part of the Romish ritual ; the thing is new and wonderful in Italy. To the priest especially the sound is terrible ; it strikes on his ear as a pæan sung over his church ; and hence the frequent and bitter complaints of the psalm-singing of the heretics.

From this central point let us look round and take a survey of the mission stations. We select a few for particular description, and group the rest together.

We begin with Leghorn. This city, till eclipsed by the growing prosperity of Genoa, was the chief seaport of Italy. Its liberties date from the era of the Medici. Already Leghorn contained an English church, a Scotch Presbyterian chapel, a Greek temple, a Turkish mosque, and a Jewish synagogue, and the addition of another to its already numerous "rites" could be, one would have supposed, a matter of no great difficulty. Yet it was in the free city of Leghorn that the most violent opposition was offered to the establishment of a Waldensian mission station. The details of that opposition brings out the true state of the popular mind, and the variety and formidable character of the obstacles over which the young evangelism of Italy has had to fight its way. Tolerance had been inserted in the national code—it had yet to be inserted in the opinion and practice of the nation.

The station was formed early in 1860. A young evangelist visited the town and held a small meeting in a private apartment. The thing becoming known, the owner of the house was deprived of his situation, and his wife, a dressmaker, of her customers. Then a hall, capable of containing a hundred and fifty persons, was, after great difficulty, rented. The opposition waxed more violent, and the audience more numerous. Night after night hundreds left the door unable to obtain admission. The proprietor of the hall was coaxed, threatened, tempted in every way to cancel his agreement, but in vain. Disturbances of the public peace were next tried, and some liberals of note took part in these riots. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul, the new form which the Jesuits have assumed, had previously established

a branch in Leghorn; hence the excitement of the public mind, and the deeds of violence in which it found vent.

At this stage of the affair a piece of ground was leased, and a wooden shed erected to serve as a church, till a stone fabric should be reared. The gospel was getting foothold in Leghorn. The storm grew yet fiercer. The Jesuits went from house to house, stirring up the faithful and calling upon them to rise and expel the plague from their city. The press uttered bitter complaints and calumnies. The pulpits awoke and began to thunder against Protestantism. Friars, famed for their eloquence, were brought from a distance, and hired, like Balaam, to curse this new people from the heretical regions of England and the Cottian Alps. But in the midst of this loud clamour, there were some who were inquiring in silence into the opinions of this sect everywhere spoken against. Fly-sheets and pamphlets on the Protestant side were scattered among the population, and not without effect, as the growing attendance at the wooden shed testified.

The young evangelist, Ribet by name, was a man of zeal, courage, and keen intelligence. Instead of quailing before the storm he went to the cathedral, listened to the philippics thundered from its pulpit against Protestantism, and answered them next evening, in presence of a numerous auditory, in his own church. The priests did not much relish this method of conducting the war, and it began to be whispered that they had bethought them of other weapons not so likely to be shivered in their hands. Several well informed parties called on M. Ribet,

and warned him that sixty men had banded themselves together to deal him a stab in the dark, and cast his body into the nearest ditch. A *ruse* it might be to induce the much dreaded evangelist to quit Leghorn. The report, however, was credited on the spot, and henceforward M. Ribet was escorted home every evening by a select body of his hearers, who quitted him only when they saw him safe in his own dwelling.

The affair was now about to pass from the streets into the higher arena of the government offices. At the bottom of these noisy discussions was a principle of the very highest importance. The question at issue was nothing less than this—Shall the law or the priest bear rule in the country? The law said, "Protestantism must be tolerated." The priest said, "It shall be suppressed." It was now to be seen which should carry the day, the constitution or the church, for now a regular application was lodged at Turin for the government sanction to the opening of the new Waldensian church. Cavour, then at the head of the nation, and who, although not a Protestant, felt that Protestantism must be tolerated as a logical necessity of liberty, sent down the order to the officials at Leghorn for the opening of the Waldensian temple. But unhappily the administrators of the law were against the law, and the order of the minister remained a dead letter. Cavour was again applied to, and again an order was sent down for the opening of the church, which was treated with the same contempt as the former. It seemed as if the constitution, with the toleration it held forth, must go to the wall. A third time Cavour was applied to, and after some delay and

many difficulties, a third order (it was among the last acts of the great minister) was despatched, this time not to the Leghorn officials, but to Dr. Revel, of the Waldensian college at Florence; and the result was that the new church at Leghorn was opened in June, 1861. We have dwelt the longer on this matter because it is a battle which covered, in its issues, the whole of the Italian soil. It was the turning-point in the working of the constitution, testing, as it did, whether it could or could not confer the religious liberty which it promised.

Another point of toleration was fought for and won at Leghorn. We refer to the right of the evangelicals to the public cemeteries. The Church of Rome meets the Italian in his cradle, and takes leave of him only at the grave. If he dies beyond the pale of the church, he dies beyond the pale of Christian burial. The evangelicals, accordingly, found the gates of the *Campo Santo* closed against their dead. They might rot above ground or be buried with the burial of a dog, but into the sepulchres of the nation their dust should not come. In some places, as Genoa, they purchased plots of ground, and walling them in, used them as burial-places; but even then it was rare that they could lay their own dead in their own grave-yards without insult and outrage. The procession, moving quietly along in the fast falling evening, without priest, and without holy candles, notified itself as a Protestant burial, and the crowd testified their abhorrence by hooting, and pelting with mud or stones the coffin and those who carried it. To such a pass did matters come in this respect in Leghorn, that a number of young men volunteered to form an escort to the Protestant

dead on their way to their last resting-place. The government was appealed to. The right of burial in the public cemeteries of the country was demanded by the converts as a logical consequence of the toleration of worship extended by the constitution. The scenes which were of frequent occurrence in many parts of the country, and in which public decency as well as public liberty was outraged, came to the help of this argument; and the contest ended in 1863 by the government enjoining the various municipalities throughout the country to set apart at their own expense, by a wall or ditch, a portion of the common cemeteries for the burial of non-Catholics. A terrible outcry was raised by the priesthood at the awful profanation of the "holy fields" of the country by the interment within their consecrated precincts of heretical dust; but the battle was won, and another point of liberty was conquered for the nation.

It only remains to be said that the church at Leghorn, born amidst these troubles, has, by the blessing of God, prospered greatly. It now numbers about a hundred and fifty members, admitted on examination; it has a large attendance on Sabbath and week-day services, schools, male and female, evening classes for civilians and soldiers, and other agencies for diffusing that gospel, which in making good its position in Leghorn, made good several important privileges, not for that city alone, but for all Italy.

We now turn northward to Lucca. A ray of light falling upon Lucca in the sixteenth century brought it into contact with the Reformation. The Reformation was embraced by several families of note in it, among whom were the Calendrini, the Burlamachi, the

Turretini, the Diodati, the Micheli, and others. Driven into exile, these illustrious men transferred to Geneva the light which their native town knew not how to value. A halo of glory gathered round the city of their adoption but a deeper darkness descended on Lucca. The visitor at this day is struck with the contrast between the natural riches of the region and the poverty of its inhabitants. The town occupies the middle of a fine plain, which the Serchio waters, and the spurs of the Apennines enclose. The soil produces oil and wine in plenty, silk and cotton of excellent quality, while quarries of marble and mines of precious metals exist below the surface. But of what avail is all this wealth when the skill and industry to turn it to account are lacking? Devolving the cultivation of the fields upon the women, the men in summer go in quest of that employment abroad which might be found more profitable at home.

But Lucca enjoys several compensating advantages. Its archbishop has the privilege of wearing the purple of the Roman cardinals. It boasts the possession of the *Volto Santo*, a crucifix which Nicodemus attempted to paint, but, lacking skill, an angel, snatching the pencil from his hands, finished the work! It has a priest for every thirty-three inhabitants; and although its population is below 30,000, it is enriched with twenty convents. Last and greatest, Lucca has a standing miracle in its river, which formerly flowed close by the town, but is now some two miles distant from it; having been diverted from its course by Saint Fredian when it threatened to overflow the city. Macchiavelli, in his "History of the Florentine Republic," affirms that the bed of the Serchio was changed, not by

the saint, but by the spades of the Luccese, who hearing that the Florentines, with whom they were then at war, had contrived to dam up the Serchio and drown Lucca in its own river, hastily dug a new and more distant bed for its waters. We shall leave the reader to determine this weighty point for himself.

The light, after three centuries, has returned to Lucca, the enemy unwarily rekindling it. A student of the name of Gregori, having written a religious tract, was indicted for attacking the religion of the state, and brought to Lucca to be tried. This was in the summer of 1862. The trial ended in his acquittal. The same evening thirty citizens of Lucca, till then unknown to him, waited upon him, and prayed him to remain with them and instruct them in the doctrines of the cross. He at once acceded to their request. Their first place of meeting was shut against them at the end of a few weeks, on the plea that they were using it for a conventicle. A larger hall was procured, but the boys and rabble took to breaking the windows.

Four times in the course of the year the evangelist and his flock were turned into the street. The magistrate did what he could to protect them against the bigotry of the populace; but happily in the summer of 1864, a house was offered for sale, which the little handful resolved on purchasing, that there, despite the intrigues of the monks and the subserviency of the landlords, they might regularly meet for the worship of God. The bargain was concluded, the title-deeds were signed, when to their surprise and joy they discovered that the house which had just come into their possession was the identical building in which their fathers three centuries

ago had worshipped God. They had purchased one of the old temples of the Reformation.

This church was opened in November, 1864, the priests unwittingly doing all in their power to fill it. They had given out that the *evangelici* were accustomed, on such occasions, to sacrifice an ox in honour of the devil; and the country people in great numbers flocked to town, anxious to witness the extraordinary sight. They looked when the animal should be led forth and slain; but the service closing without any such phenomenon, the disappointed spectators were not slow to vent their anger in expressions no ways complimentary to those who had sent them on what turned out to be a fool's errand.

About the same time that Lucca welcomed back the gospel, stations were opened in Bagni di Lucca, Avezzo, and Sienna. This latter city, not less bigoted than Lucca, had resisted many previous efforts to dissipate its darkness. Somewhat earlier the towns of Modena and Parma had begun to be evangelised by the agency of the Wesleyan mission. Other places might have been entered upon, but labourers were wanting. In almost all these towns the entrance of the evangelist was the signal for rioting and outrage.

These scenes remind us of those "tumults, seditions, and strifes" which accompanied the Apostle Paul, eighteen centuries ago, in his journeyings through the cities of Asia Minor. Stonings, imprisonments, beatings, sometimes unto death,* are still the lot

* *Il Raccoglitore Evangelico* of November 15th, 1864, states that the son of a poor woman was beaten to death in the streets of Monza by country people, who had been infuriated by the diatribes of the priests.

of the preachers and disciples of the gospel, and the Acts of the Apostles is being repeated before our eyes at this very day on the soil of Italy.

(NOTE, p. 225.)—The Claudian Press supplies the agency through which some of the most important operations of the Religious Tract Society in Italy are carried on. The following list of publications which have been issued by the Society, from this press alone, during the last three years, will afford some idea of the extent and value of its operations.

1862.—Il primato del Papa, 3,000; La Chiesa o il Vangelo, 1,638; Sacerdozio e Ministero, 1,329; Catalogo, 1,500; Differenza fra il Protestantismo e Romanismo, 2,000; Il Colpo di Grazia, 10,000; Voce degli Antichi, 2,000; Catechismo delle Madri, 2,500; Fischi ma non bussi, 7,000; La Religione degli Avi, 2,000; Dialogo fra un Dottore e un Popolano, 2,000; Chi ha falsificato la Bibbia, 3,000; Speranze d'un Cappuccino, 2,000; Gli Evangelici Valdesi, 2,000; La Invocazione Dei Santi, 2,000; La Chiesa Romana Giudicata, 2,000; Impossibilità del Viaggio di S. Pietro a Roma, 3,000; Dialogo fra un Popolano (No. 2), 2,000; Il vero tracollo, 3,000.

Together 53,967 copies.

1863.—Viaggio di San Pietro, 3,000; Dialogo fra un Popolano (No. 2), 2,000; Il vero tracollo, 3,000; Va a Gesù, 3,000; De Sanctis' Lettere al Cardinal Patrizi, 3,000; L'Orologia, 3,000; Anatomia del Papismo, 2,000; Vuoi tu scampare, 3,000; La Domenica, 3,000; La Domenica Scozzese, 3,000; L'Alba, 3,000; Breve Esposizione delle Dottrine Generali dei Riformati, 2,500; Roccia de' Secoli, 2,000; La Fede Cattolica, 3,000; I Figlio del Tessitore Svizzero, 1,500; Mattia Gregg, 2,000; Dialoghetti, di De Sanctis, 78,000.

Together 120,000 copies.

1864.—Linea dopo Linea, 6,000; Orate voi? 3,000; Addio al Papa, 3,000; Aonio Paleario, 2,000; Il Purgatorio, 5,000; La Messa, 5,000; Dizionario dei Paralleli, Concordanze ed Analogie Bibliche, 2,000; Sermoni del Rev. C. H. Spurgeon (8), 3,000 each = 24,000.

Together 50,000 copies.

Making a total, in three years, of 223,967 copies. Many other publications have been largely assisted by the Religious Tract Society.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE EVANGELISATION—ITS RADIATION FROM MILAN.

Few spots, even in this interesting land, surpass in interest the capital of Lombardy. Milan is alike rich in natural scenery, in architectural grandeur, and in historic recollections. The vast plain around it, majestically guarded, on this side by the snowy Alps, on that by the blue Apennines, blossoming in fadeless verdure, and overflowing with exhaustless fertility, might almost have been the site of Paradise. Climb the central tower of the Duomo, and look along that plain from the snowy Ortler-Spitz, which rises dome-like in the east, to the shining pyramid of Monte Viso, on the border of the Waldensian land, a full hundred and fifty miles to the westward—where on earth is such another garden to be seen? What a measureless expanse of golden grain, of ruddy grape, and of sycamore and mulberry woods embowering white villas and old historic towns! The noble rivers, which the suns of summer call forth from their prison of Alpine ice, to water the plain, might have been the “Gihon” and the “Hiddekel;” and those mountains, which defend it on the north, white as alabaster, and touching heaven in their loftiness, might have been the gates and towers set up by the great Architect of all to enclose the seat of primeval innocence.

But the deepest sources of interest attaching to this city and its plain are the historic ones. Milan has played no unimportant part in the history of the western world. The famous edict, which closed the era of primitive persecutions, and extended toleration to Christianity throughout the Roman empire, was dated from Milan. Here lived one of the most renowned fathers of the early church—the holy and the courageous Ambrose, and his spirit long survived him in the purity and independence of the church of Milan. From the dwellings on its plain went up of old time the morning hymn and the evening prayer; and in its dust sleep a mighty multitude who await the “resurrection of the just.” Its glorious past will yield, we feel assured, a yet more glorious future. For many a dreary century the night of idolatry has covered it; but signs begin to appear that the darkness of priestly tyranny is about to be rolled away.

The heart of the evangelisation of Italy is at Florence. There it is to be seen as a great educational and literary propaganda. In Milan it flourishes as a mission. There are not fewer than five congregations in the capital of Lombardy. The numbers who profess adherence to the gospel are reckoned at about a thousand, almost all converts from the Church of Rome. From Milan the word of life is being sounded forth to the towns and villages on the plain around. The evangelists all unite in saying that they can visit no town in Lombardy where they have not ready access to the population. Everywhere they might at once open stations were not men and money wanting. Even with these hindrances the work goes on. The evangelistic operations extend on the east to the

Austrian frontier, and on the north to the foot of the Alps, where centres of light are being kindled amid the darkness which has for ages enveloped the lovely shores of Como and Maggiore.

Many causes contribute to this more prosperous condition of the evangelisation in Milan. The character of the people has doubtless its influence. They are distinct from, and, as some think, superior to any of the other races that have peopled the peninsula. The local authorities are friendly, at least, to the extent of maintaining the rights of worship conceded by the constitution. The priests in the towns are generally liberal, being opposed to the temporal power of the pope; but not knowing the gospel, they cannot be expected to set on foot a religious reformation. Education is more advanced in Lombardy; and the government inspectors have access to all the elementary schools, despite the bishops and priests. The people are of more liberal sentiments than in the rest of Italy; indeed, popular opinion in Milan runs rather in favour of republicanism, although every manifestation of that sort is suppressed from the conviction that at present an united Italy is possible only under Victor Emmanuel. The present Archbishop of Milan, Monsignor Caccia, the opposite in all points of his famous predecessor, Ambrose, has helped, though undesignedly, to make the gospel flourish. Arrogant, ambitious, at feud with the government, at war with the evangelicals, and hated by his own flock, he resides constantly at Monza, fearing to come to Milan, lest the populace should pelt him with stones. To these favouring causes are to be added the dispositions of the public press. The *Perseveranza*, the most influential journal in Lombardy, discussed last

summer the religious condition of the country, advocating simply a reform in the government of the church; but it has since advanced a step, and now demands a reform in its creed also. A year ago politics were all in all; but now the religious question has fairly emerged. It is no longer "the Pope *versus* the King," but "the Pope *versus* the Gospel," which begins to engross the public press and the public thought. This is hopeful.

From its candlestick in the capital of Lombardy the light is diffusing itself all round. If the reader will unroll the map of Northern Italy, he may see at a glance how numerous and how finely distributed are the towns which have received the gospel. They lie in concentric circles around Milan. Those which are most prominent on the map, are precisely those which have caught the ray, and not only do they shine themselves, but they become in their turn centres of light to the towns and villages around them. Beginning on the north, Intra, on the shore of Lake Maggiore, and the most important of the cities of Verbano, has become a centre of gospel light. In Como there are two congregations. In Monza, under the very shadow of the archiepiscopal residence, a little church flourishes. In Varese and Caravaggio, famous for its shrine of the Madonna, there are those who worship the one Mediator. In the important town of Bergamo the gospel has been welcomed; in Brescia there are two centres of evangelisation; in Cremona the heralds of the cross have found some to listen to their message. We pass on to Parma, where is one of the most numerous and flourishing congregations in all Italy; to Guastalla, where M. Turin, from Milan, has found,

despite the excommunication of the bishop, six hundred hearers to welcome him; to Modena, where a little leaven has been introduced into the mass; and to complete the circle, we come round to Pavia, a university town. Beyond the Apennines on the south, the gospel has found entrance into Bologna, till recently, under the triple crown; and the light that shone on the palaces of Ferrara three centuries ago, has returned, promising morning more auspicious than that which, under Renée, opened so sweetly on Ferrara, only to be ruthlessly quenched by the tyranny of Duke Ercole, her husband; in this the tool of a yet greater tyrant, the pope.*

This promising state of the evangelisation in Northern Italy is greatly owing to the energy and devotedness of the missionaries of the Wesleyan Methodist body, in conjunction with the other evangelists in Milan. The work, moreover, has been powerfully aided by Professor Oddo, whose lectures in Milan and the surrounding cities have awakened great interest, and by Signor Ferretti, whose schools in Florence have been largely blessed to the youth attending them, numbering upwards of two hundred. Nor must we omit mention of De Sanctis, who from his quiet closet on the banks of the Arno is radiating, by means of his powerful pen, the light to all quarters of Italy.

When the evangelisation was weak it awakened no fear, and provoked no opposition, but now that it begins to gather strength it is violently opposed. Out of a multitude of cases let us select Pistoia as an example. In the beginning of 1864, a few individuals began to meet together to read the word of life. They

* See *Il Raccoglitore Evangelico* for October, 1864.

were visited by an evangelist. Their numbers grew. After infinite difficulty they obtained a place of regular meeting, and it was resolved to open it on the third Sabbath of October, 1864, three evangelists going thither for that purpose. The guardians of the darkness had already taken measures to punish this bold invasion of their territory, and to make sure that it should never be repeated. We shall permit the *Eco della Verita* of Florence to describe the scene. "After being tossed from place to place," says the writer, an eye-witness to the scene he is describing, "our evangelists at last found a man, who, fearing neither priest nor monk, was willing to let them a room in his house on the Piazza San Lorenzo, adjoining the church and convent of the Capuccini, and surrounded by the dwellings of the poor, who are with few exceptions pensioners of the monks.

"The room, which was on the ground floor, was then prepared for the meetings, and on Sabbath last three evangelists started from Florence to inaugurate the worship of God there. The morning service began at eleven. Dr. De Sanctis preached from Acts xvii. 23, 'The unknown God; whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you.' The morning service passed off without any other disturbance than that produced by a troop of fellows of 'the baser sort' singing the *stornello* at the door of a neighbouring shop, from the beginning of our worship to the end of it. . . . But the demonstration had been reserved for the evening. This was known throughout Pistoia, and we ourselves were apprised of it, and gave information to the police, requesting their interference to prevent any disorders. This they accordingly pro-

mised, and we leave it to themselves to explain why they broke their word. At half-past eight p.m. we were at our posts. The piazza was occupied with groups of people, and the room began to fill, while a boy who had climbed the grating of a window towards the street, ready to give the signal, descended as soon as our services commenced, and the tumult began at once. A volley of stones, which did not leave a pane of glass in the frames, was discharged against our windows and doors, accompanied by the wildest howlings, and many of the stones entered the room. We then closed the doors, as the discharge of stones continued, and one of our evangelists slipped out by a side door to summon the police and the royal carabinieri.

"Among our congregation were certain Pistoians who, although they knew not the gospel, wished to hear what we had to say, desiring freedom of opinion; and these persons, knowing what was likely to occur, had come armed, and now that the tumult had increased, and the stones were thrown in among us, they drew their swords, and would have rushed upon the assailants, but for the efforts of our evangelists, who thus prevented the shedding of blood, always to be deprecated.

"In the meantime the police and the troops made their appearance, and the tumult was in some degree calmed down, but no one was arrested. The brigadier of the force requested us to close our services for the evening, to which we consented, under protest that we did so in compliance with his request, knowing that we were exercising our rights, and disturbing no person, that we were proclaiming the gospel in our own hired house to those who wished to listen to its message.

The officer recognised our rights, and we put out our lamps. The crowd then dispersed, and we were able to leave in safety.”*

From the *Raccoglitore*† we learn that on the following Sabbath the *stornello* was sung during the whole time of service, that the piazza was filled with groups, but not so formidably armed as on the previous Sabbath, when they had come provided with stones, staves, and stilet-toes, and that an assault was made on the windows and doors, but speedily stopped by the soldiers, who dispersed the crowd. Investigations have since been set on foot, and, says the *Raccoglitore*, these have shown that the priests and monks were at the bottom of the tumults. The young church thus baptised in persecution continues to grow.

From Central Italy we turn to the Alps. Already their crests begin to burn with the coming day. The valley of Aosta, which, opening from the plain of Piedmont, and running all the way to the glaciers of Mont Blanc, is one continuous winding path of beauty and grandeur. Here there are now three centres of evangelisation. The first is Montestrutto, around which are clustered several smaller stations. The second is the town of Aosta, which, although containing not much over a thousand souls, has forty priests, who have preached many more sermons during the last three years than during the previous thirty. Their one topic has been Protestantism; and their one aim to warn their flocks against the danger they incur from it. They further fortify their hearers against heretical seduction, by occasionally burning Bibles in the

* See *L'Eco della Verità* of October 22nd, 1864.

† See *Il Raccoglitore Evangelico* of November 15th, 1864.

public square. In 1861 the attendance amounted to one hundred and thirty persons ; but the troubles growing out of the burial of the colporteur, Doro, who was thrown into a grave at night, where only criminals are interred, thinned the audience. It has since increased to eighty, and in several of the surrounding villages, which the evangelist visits, the attendance is good. The sale of Bibles in Aosta in 1861 was 1,500 copies.

The third station, and the oldest of all in this valley, is Courmayeur, at the foot of Mont Blanc. The first awakening here is traceable to a minister of the Free Church of Scotland, who visited it in quest of health in 1856. A little church has grown up in the midst of troubles ; and thus, on the verge of the eternal snow, we behold disciples of the gospel, who have established family worship in their houses, and who, by the distribution of Bibles, and other evangelistic efforts, strive to bring the simple mountaineers around them to the knowledge of the Saviour.

It is well known that John Calvin resided for some time in Aosta, and, when he departed, left behind him a few disciples of the Reformation. The three centuries that followed did not suffice wholly to efface Calvin's foot-prints, for when the present movement broke out it was found that the valley of Aosta contained one or two families professedly Protestant, who had in their possession some heirlooms of the Reformation in the shape of works which had escaped the keen pursuit of the inquisitors of Rome.*

In places manifold, in our progress through Italy, we light on spots where the sixteenth century sowed,

* *Rapport de la Commission d'Evangelisation au Synode de l'Eglise Vaudoise qui se reunira a La Tour of May 17th, 1864. Florence, 1864.*

and the nineteenth reaps. These links between the past and the present are full of interest. They afford singular glimpses into the providence of God; and they encourage the faithful labourer. They bid him not despair, although his labours do not fructify on the instant. If it is the good seed which he is sowing, it will not perish. It may lie a year, or a hundred years, or three hundred years, below the soil, but it will spring up one day. Past battles for liberty, which may have been lost, and past blood which the earth has drunk up, are but so much seed cast into the soil. Let us, then, sow the seed. In the great coming harvest of the earth every particle of it will rise again; and all who have sowed in faith, from Paul to Augustine, and from Augustine to those of our own day, shall reap together in joy.

One other locality only shall we specify—the island of Elba, in the Tuscan Archipelago, famous as the spot where the conqueror of Europe passed a brief interval before his last great struggle. Now it begins to be the scene of triumphs more illustrious than any Napoleon ever won. Small indeed were the beginnings of the work. So long ago as 1855 some sailors belonging to the town of Rio carried a freight of charcoal in their *speranzella* to Nice. There they met with M. Say, a Waldensian evangelist, and Francisco Madiai. When they left, the captain of the vessel was presented with a Bible by Francisco Madiai, which he carried with him to his island home. First the captain himself was converted by the Bible. Next several of his neighbours were converted by it; and in a little while a small company was gathered round this Bible, to whom, under the Spirit, it was the only pastor. Perse-

cuted, their numbers increased. In 1861, when the country became free, Dr. Stuart sent them an evangelist. The priests and monks now strove, and not in vain, to rouse the passions of the people. The devil had invaded the island, they said, and terrible judgments would befall its inhabitants if he were not driven out. When the evangelist appeared in the street he was pointed at, insulted, occasionally pelted with stones, and if he crossed the threshold of a dwelling, the holy water of the church was brought to wash out the pollution. His flock were visited with every species of annoyance and suffering, short of death. Firmly attached to the gospel, patient, courageous, and loving, their simple but noble bearing, rather than the interference of the authorities, won at length their fellow-citizens, and disarmed the opposition which the priests had provoked. The Christians at Rio have now a church, built at an expense of six hundred pounds, a pastor, a numerous congregation, and a school which is well attended. Congregations have also been formed in two other towns of the island—Longone and Portoferraio—where the gospel brings forth fruit as it does wherever it has come on this land. The Christianity of these islanders has the charm of a rare simplicity and beauty.

Let us now take a survey of the evangelistic work, in its distribution over Northern and Central Italy, confining our attention, for the present, mainly, although not exclusively, to those agencies which have their centre at Florence. We begin with the plain of Piedmont on the north. Turin is the oldest, and perhaps the strongest station out of the Waldensian

Valleys. Under its able pastors, there is now a congregation of upwards of four hundred persons, all drawn out of the Church of Rome, and about a hundred Protestants of different nationalities; to this add four day-schools, a Sabbath-school, a printing-press, a Bible and tract dépôt, and various other agencies for the diffusion of the gospel. The church at Turin may well be termed the mother and mistress of all the young Italian churches; for everywhere, in Sicily, Calabria, Emilia, and Lombardy, are to be found those who frankly acknowledge that their first impressions of Divine truth were received in the temple at Turin. On the west the evangelisation extends to Pignerol, at the door of the Valleys, and on the east to the capital of Lombardy, Pavia, Brescia, the shores of Como, and as far as to the Austrian frontier.

Tracing the work southwards we touch Alessandria, Asti, Cassale, and the towns around Marengo, where a greater contest is now in progress than that which reddened the soil of this famous battle-field. In the sea-port of Genoa is a numerous congregation with its schools, and its reunions at Castelletto and San Pier d'Arena. In several of the towns on the Ligurian shore, the light has been kindled, as in Nice on the west, and in Chiavari and Spezzia on the east. Inland, too, as at Favale and other mountain villages, are little companies of disciples.

Beyond Leghorn, the mission posts, thinly planted as yet, extend along the coast, where alternate marshes and magnificently-wooded mountains, with towns crowning their summits, or clustering on their sides. Grossetto, Cortona with its hundred towers, and other places, have received the gospel. The Bible it was

which opened their gates to the evangelist. But the preaching of the kingdom does not, as yet, draw crowds to it. Nevertheless, God is doing as he promised, "I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion." In the words of Pastor Meille, "It is not fishing with the net, but with the line."

All through Central Italy, gleaming upon the ridges of its Apennines, the beacon-fires of the gospel now begin to burn. Bologna, Ferrara, Sienna, Perugia, Todi, are so many centres, which guide the eye from the Alps to the very gates of the Papal States. From the top of St. Peter's one may almost see the more advanced of these signal-lights in the valley of the Clitumnus beyond the Tiber. So closely does the light begin to press around the darkness.

The third great line of Italian evangelisation runs along by the shore of the Adriatic, on the east of the peninsula. This territory, extending from Ravenna to the southern extremity of Italy, till 1859, was under the sway of the pope and the King of Naples. Nowhere was the night darker; but colporteurs carried the light into these regions of thick shade. A land of drought it was, but now springs of living water have burst forth, here and there. Some of its towns have since had a visit from the evangelist, and little churches have arisen in them. Ancona, Pescara in the Abruzzi, Barletta, and Bari on the sea-coast, are among the places to which the glad tidings of the kingdom have come. There is a growing desire in the region to know the gospel. The priests, in some instances, have welcomed the evangelist, and the work might be greatly extended could labourers be found.

Such, generally sketched, is the distribution of the

evangelisation in Italy. The gospel acts along three great lines. A chain of evangelistic posts occupies the western shore; another has arisen on the eastern; and a third runs along through the centre of the country. Beginning at Mont Blanc, these lines of light enclose the land, and terminate in Sicily, sending off lateral rays to illumine the deep gloom through which their course lies. It is further notable that these three lines precisely coincide with those of the railway system of Italy. Three trunk railway lines traverse the peninsula right and left and in the centre; and thus do the main channels of Italy's commerce and the main channels of its evangelisation lie side by side.

When we take into account that the population of Italy is twenty-two millions, and that her towns, great and small, are counted by thousands, we cannot but feel that the places where the evangelical worship has been established are few, and that the disciples of the Saviour form a "little flock." Signor Meille, in 1861, estimated the number of Christian converts in Italy at 2,000. Granting that they have since been doubled or trebled, they are still, comparatively, an insignificant company. But the work is not to be estimated by the mere number of the converts, but by the change which has passed on public opinion, by the political and social progress which has been realised, and by the machinery which has been created for the prosecution of the evangelistic work; and all in a few years! A little while ago the sky of Italy was without a star. And if now there are a few lights in it separated by great intervals, and shining with feeble ray, the wonder is that there are these few, and that they continue to multiply. For even while we gaze, another and

another beams out before our eyes, and the horizon all round begins to be streaked with the signs of coming day. Soon may that day come! As one that awakes from delirium, or escapes from the phantoms of some horrid night, or as one that comes out of the grave, so will be the rising of that people. But it is a solemn reflection that this is a day of visitation—a second day of visitation to Italy. If now, in this her day, she shall know the things that belong to her peace, happy, thrice happy, will it be for that land. But if, at the bidding of her worst foe, Italy shall drive out the gospel a second time, who shall say when it will return? She is now on her trial. The issues are tremendous. Above her hangs the crown of liberty and of gospel truth. Which shall she choose—the crown, or the dungeon from which she has just escaped? Let all who love Italy pray; that, closing her ear against the fiends that would tempt her back into the old darkness, she may put forth her hand, and placing the crown upon her brow, find at last peace for herself, and give peace to the world.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE EVANGELISATION—NAPLES.

NAPLES and its bay once seen live in the memory like a bright dream, or a glorious vision. The Italians have a saying that the Bay of Naples is a piece of paradise which fell down to the earth. Its brilliant beauty almost justifies the fancy.

Can we reconstruct the scene on paper? Take a segment of a circle of glorious hills with an arc of a hundred miles, and a chord of sixty or thereabouts. Fill in the vast space which the mountains enclose with a sea, calm and crystalline, like that which the seer of Patmos saw in vision. On the bold hill which shuts in the bay on its northern extremity hang in successive tiers the city of Naples, now energetic with the new life which liberty has brought it. On the right, push forward the long, low, palm-fringed promontory of Posilipo. On the left, prolong the line of towering mountains in a sweep of full fifty miles, till they terminate in the majestic headland of Sorrento. On the chord of the arc, in the midst of the bay, and right in the front of the city, put down the cloud-like cluster of serrated mountains which form the island of Capri. As seen rising out of the mirror-like sea, clothed all day long with a succession of rich tints varying with every hour the whole day long, there is nothing to

remind one that it was the haunt of a tyrant execrable above all the tyrants of earth. One other feature only is wanting to complete the outline of this renowned region. This is Vesuvius. It stands in front of the Apennines, that sweep on in its rear, a little way back from the shore, being placed about midway between Naples and the headland of Sorrento. A white cloud is seen to hover continually upon its summit. As waves the plume above the steel helmet of the warrior, or as floats the banneret upon some ancient donjon keep, so floats this mysterious cloud above the mountain top.

Such is the frame-work of the region. Let us attempt the filling in of the outline. Draw a glittering line of white towns all round the bay, from the furthest extremity of Posilipo on the west to the mighty mass of Sorrento on the east. To soften somewhat the intense glare of the buildings, throw around them embowering groves of fig and cactus, orange and olive, in tropical luxuriance. Clothe the sides of the mountains with vineyards, olive woods, and forest trees, with, here and there, great rocks and sparkling towns peering out amid the foliage. Above, let the naked peaks be seen shooting like spires into the sky, and flashing in the sunlight. Lastly, throw over the whole scene those gorgeous tints which impart to the landscape its intense splendour, and which blend and change every hour, passing from the rich purple of early morning to the burning brilliance of noon, and from the brilliance of noon to the soft effulgence of eve.

So much for the physical attractions of the region. Its deepest interest lies in its historic associations. These link it inseparably with both pagan and Christian memories. Beyond Posilipo is the promontory of

Misenum, the shore of Baiæ, and the region of Aver-nus—names which recall the whole mythology of the ancients. To the Christian, of not less interest will be the town of Puzzuoli, the ancient Puteoli, where Paul's voyage terminated, and where he sojourned a whole week on his way to Rome. What must have been the feelings of the apostle as he trod the holy ground of heathendom, the sun-lit fields of Elysium, and the shady groves of Avernus. Its temples and altars rose proudly then. They are fallen now, and the only memorials that they ever existed are the ruins which bestrew the soil on which they formerly stood, and which, scorched by volcanic fire, is little better than a blackened waste.

A yet more affecting memorial is that which presents itself on the eastern shore of this bay. On the southern flank of Vesuvius stood the city of Pompeii. There like Sodom she lived a life of idleness and lewdness, and there her ruins are now seen. After an interment of seventeen centuries, Pompeii, in our day, has come up from her grave with the record of her monstrous wickedness written with her own finger upon her very walls. Thus does she bear witness against herself, while she vindicates the justice of Him who swept her from the earth in a shower of fire and ashes. Pompeii had made herself vile, and the great Judge doomed her to perish.

In this region, so glorious physically, so darkened morally, the light of the gospel is beginning to shine. In St. Paul's time there was a little church here, but it disappears in the growing darkness of the great apostacy. In the sixteenth century, a little company of disciples sprung up, among whom were Vittoria Colonna Valdez

and Caracciolo; but the inquisition rooted out the gospel, and scattered its professors. A third time the good work has been resumed by a small band of evangelists, Bascarlet, Appia, and the Marchese Cresi, of Naples. These devoted labourers are men of quiet but persistent energy; they are gathering converts round them; their congregations continue to grow; but the predominating character of the evangelisation in Naples is the educational. It is the school rather than the church which is undermining the Romanism of Southern Italy. It is on this feature of the evangelisation of Naples that we wish to fix attention.

The degradation of the Neapolitans—their laziness, rudeness, and filth—has been a favourite topic with almost every traveller; but oftentimes censors of the Neapolitans have forgotten to take account of the injury which tyranny and superstition have done to a people which nature has endowed with intellects of amazing promptitude and clearness. Let us only think what would be the state of London or Glasgow were every school they contain to be shut up; and if to the suppression of all the agencies of intellectual and moral training—the closing of every infant, ragged, and industrial school—there was to be added the closing of the churches, or what is equivalent, the spending of the Sabbath in gazing on spectacles instead of hearing religious truth; and that this was to be continued for a generation, nay, for centuries; can any man imagine what, in that case, would be the condition of the populace of these towns? This is the very system which has been pursued towards the Neapolitans. Their glorious region has been but a vast prison, their numerous keepers governing them by blows. The wonder is

not that they are idle, crafty, and dishonest, but that they have not become as fierce and bloodthirsty as the wolves of the desert.

With the Bourbon this black night fled. No sooner was the flag of a free government seen waving over the territory than suddenly there sprang up among the Neapolitans no ordinary desire for knowledge. Schools were extemporised, and, although of a singularly primitive type, the youth crowded to them, eager to be taught. A lady who visited Naples at that period records, with graphic pen, the first humble steps of the Neapolitan on the ladder of knowledge: "In the early days of constitutional liberty," says she, "before there had been time to open schools, it was not rare to see some perambulant pedagogue, with his huge placard of written letters, leaning against an old column, a pole, or anything that first came to hand, surrounded by a motley group of voluntary scholars; the old *fachino* would lay down his burden; the shoemaker, the tailor, the sailor, the fisherman, would abridge their noon-day repose, and join with ragged, uncombed urchins round the magic signs which were to open to them the temple of knowledge. One such scene as this speaks more than volumes."*

The government immediately stepped in, as we have already stated; but its efforts left abundant room for other labourers in a city so large and neglected as Naples. The population is not less than half a million, and its streets and alleys swarm with neglected youth, clothed in rags, covered with dirt, and growing up amid all kinds of demoralising influences, to replenish the ranks of the brigands in the mountains, or to swell the

* *Witness*, December 25th, 1862.

yet more dangerous bands of the "Camorristi"—the brigands of the city. Signor Buscarlet, in particular, took advantage of the thirst for knowledge which had so suddenly shown itself in Naples, and he is now, in conjunction with a committee of members of both the Scotch and English congregations, planting schools in many quarters of the city. Working with quiet but persistent energy, his success, under the Divine blessing, has been great. His plan is this: When a young priest comes to him, as frequently happens, saying, "I have abandoned the Church of Rome, and wish to be employed in the evangelisation," instead of setting him to preach, he finds work for him as a teacher. Hiring a room in some alley, he invites half-a-dozen urchins from the street, and, handing them over to the expriest, starts him as schoolmaster. In a week the half-dozen have become a score, in a month the score has increased to fifty, and so on. In teaching others the priest teaches himself.

In these schools every branch of secular education is taught; but their distinguishing characteristic is the religious instruction communicated in them. The Bible, and the Assembly's Shorter Catechism, are the textbooks, and it has been found that the introduction of religion is a quickening element. It vitalises the pupil. It is seen to produce a more healthful play of the faculties, and to create a keener interest and a greater aptitude for secular studies. In even these branches the superiority of the pupils to those of the communal and other schools where religion is ignored, appeared to the author manifest and great.

In company with Signor Buscarlet, we visited these schools. Threading a narrow street in the upper part

of the city, not far from the Museo Nazionale, we turned in at a doorway, and began climbing an almost interminable flight of stairs. Story after story was surmounted, and in the close and sultry atmosphere of a Neapolitan tenement, this is nearly as difficult a task as climbing Vesuvius. At last we came out upon what appeared to be the roof of the building. Lofty it was, yet all around loftier edifices met the eye. On one side was a convent. Huge it was, like a vast barrack, in whose spacious ranges room might be found for the cantonments of an army. Its grated windows ran up row upon row, overlooking from their vast altitude the surrounding buildings. On the other side rose the escarped face of the living rock, part of the mountain on which Naples is hung. The rock served as the substruction of buildings which rose to a great height, so that, although we had climbed several flights of stairs to reach our standpoint, we found that we were only, after all, in the centre of a sort of valley. In the towering mass of rock and building around us, were hung little bits of gardens, filled with olive and orange-trees, whose green foliage and golden fruit softened the dingy walls that enclosed us on all sides. Through an opening in the houses on the south we had a glimpse of the bright sea and the blue hills of Capri.

On the roof, to which we had ascended, stood a smaller tenement, to which a low door gave admission. A murmuring multitudinous hum—sound almost unheard in that land till these days—fell upon the ear. On entering we found ourselves in the midst of about a hundred boys, who were divided into several classes, and under the tuition of two masters. One was the son of a

model-maker, another of a vintner, and another of a wealthy merchant. The net had been thrown into the street, as the Neapolitan fisherman throws his into the bay, and some of all sorts had been enclosed and drawn into the school. Not the less were they volunteers, and all, as it is almost needless to say, were the sons of Papists. Some were being taught their letters; the more advanced were working sums in arithmetic, or performing exercises in grammar, or answering questions in history. The walls were garnished with maps: and one can scarce realise what a revelation a map is to an Italian boy, who, till he enters school, knows little more than his own name. The world is a *terra incognita* to him, Naples alone excepted. With the boundaries, rivers, and capitals of the European countries, the scholars were perfectly familiar; but when asked, "What is the capital of Italy?" with what a shout did they thunder forth, "*Roma!*"

But the part of their education which had taken the deepest hold on these youths was manifestly the facts and doctrines of the Bible. These had been to them the opening of a new world. It was marvellous to see how extensive and accurate was their knowledge of Scripture truth, and with what evident delight they had given themselves to the study. It was with a kindling glow of pleasure on their faces that they turned from the more secular branches to answer questions on religion. "These I set down precisely as they were put and answered.

"Who is the author of the Bible?"—"God, signor."

"Did he write it with his own hand?"—"No; he inspired apostles and holy men to write it."

"Is it all true?"—"Yes: it is all truth, signor."

"Who is Christ?"—"He is the Son of God."

"Why did he come to earth?"—"To save us."

"How did he save us?"—"By dying for us."

"Why must he die to save us?"—"Because we are sinners, and death is the wages of sin."

"Can we save ourselves?"—"No, signor."

"Can the pope or the Virgin save us?"—"No, no, signor."

"Who is the Holy Spirit?"—"He is the Vicar of Christ."

In this way did we introduce ourselves into the religious field with one of the junior classes. From a more advanced class, which we afterwards examined, we received answers equally distinct and Scriptural. "The entrance of Thy words giveth light." That light had entered before the darkness had had time to establish its dominion, and surprising it was to find how complete was the mental emancipation of these youths. The idols to which all around them were bowing down, were to them "vanity;" their molten images were "confusion and wind."

But the reader must have seen and heard these boys for himself—the earnestness of their looks, the energy of their tones, the animation that pervaded their whole persons—to judge adequately of the hold these truths have taken upon their minds. The fervour of imagination and the ideality of the Italian mind powerfully second the teacher. There is no dulness, and no cloudiness of perception: the idea is seized before it is well uttered. Truly the seed is here cast into a rich and early soil. Rome is being razed from her foundations; for whatever these boys may be in after life, it is impossible that they should ever be Papists.

Nor was it less interesting to mark what beauty belongs to the Italian face, when intelligence, once kindled in the soul, shines through in the countenance. In the case of these boys one could trace the old face passing away, and the new coming in its room. Those who had entered the school only a week or so before had still a touch of the savage about them. In the incipient scowl and the darkening glance one could read the education of the streets. But in the case of the older pupils nothing of this sort could be detected; the face, open and confiding, was all a-glow with the energy of the south—that fervour and passion which, when purified and directed aright, gives grandeur to the character, but which when left untutored corrupts into sensuousness or hardens into crime.

A solid work is being done in these schools. Seed is being sown which, in after days, will yield an abundant harvest. “Train up a child in the way he should go,” is the injunction of the Bible. Satan, who teaches his followers to condemn that book, has seen the deep wisdom of this maxim, and has taught the Jesuits to act upon it. The school in their hands has been a powerful weapon against the Reformation. Why should we not take a leaf from their book? We would say, regarding Italy, “Educate.” It is our only policy. “The old,” say those who know Italy best, and wish it well, “the old are lost, our only hope are the young.” The pope confessed, in one of his recent encyclicals, that Protestant schools gave him more alarm than Protestant preaching. Signor Buscarlet has at present between four and five hundred of the youth of Naples in his schools; and were he seconded with funds in proportion to the importance and the promise of the work, he could

indefinitely multiply both schools and scholars. It would be hard to say in what way the work in Italy could at this hour be more effectually aided than by the extension of these schools.

As I passed out at the door of the little school-room, I said to myself, Who knows but that some young Luther may be here? Out of this humble seminary may yet come deliverers for Italy. Hung here, between heaven and earth—the city below and the mountain heights overtopping it—it seems an eyrie of young eaglets, which a little time will help to fledge. Ascending still higher, and standing on the roof of the little school-room, amid the vines, oranges, and oleanders which grew there, perfuming the air with their fragrance, I was told of one of a class of instances which are of not unfrequent occurrence in connexion with the schools. The mother of one of the pupils, on the great day of St. Januarius, having lighted candles before the image, desired her son to kneel down and repeat his prayers before it. “No,” he replied, “I will not.” On his mother expressing, somewhat angrily, her surprise that he should refuse to do obeisance to the patron saint of Naples, he went to where his Bible lay, and, drawing it forth, read in justification of his refusal the second commandment. His mother heard for the first time in her life the words, “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image;” “Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them.”



CHAPTER XXV.

FROM TERNI TO ROME—THE CAMPAGNA.

THE morning of the 3rd of October found us on the road to Rome. Hiring a *vettura* at Terni, and journeying at an easy pace, we followed the line of the old Flaminian way. Our road for two hours lay along the rich valley of Terni, close to the stream of the Nar, whose floods were swollen by the thunder-storms of the previous day. Turning to the left, near the ruins of the bridge of Augustus, we passed through Narni, the poor representative of the classic Nequinum, and traversing the picturesque gorges through which struggle the united streams of the Nar and the Velino, we descended the lower slopes of the Apennines. These mountains, ever since we left Spoleto, were grouped somewhat confusedly, sending off branches in all directions, and crossing and recrossing the country with their spurs and ridges; but now, gathering themselves up, they stood back from the sea, and, forming a glorious semicircle of towering crests, they enclosed within their stony arms a plain of vast extent. To the eye, as we descended upon it, this plain appeared perfectly level. Its naked bosom, shaded by black clouds, had a drear and melancholy aspect. This was the famous *Campagna di Roma*.

We could not miss our road. There was but one

great highway along that devastated plain. How often had the legions traversed it! How often had kings, princes, and ambassadors, passed over it, bearing their greetings and their homage to her who was then mistress of the world.

“Prætors, proconsuls to their provinces
Hasting, or on return, in robes of state,
Lictors and rods, the ensigns of their power,
Legions and cohorts, turms of horse, and wings :
Or embassies from regions far remote.”*

Now upon this celebrated highway our little party were the only wayfarers. Fragments of the original pavement are still to be seen upon it, but, after the wear and tear of twenty centuries, its travertine blocks lie not quite so firm in their places, nor so closely joined as once they were. The violent joltings of our carriage as it passed over them provoked on the part of our vetturino the frequent exclamation, *Via cattiva!* So little reverence had the man for this ancient road which the feet of victorious legions and august emperors had made sacred!

As we pursued our course we could see that the plain was rapidly assuming the air of a desert. The dwellings were beginning to lie wide apart. The vegetation was becoming thin, wiry, and wilderness-like. The mulberry grove and the orange plantation we had left behind us at Terni. The vine even had forsaken us. But there lingered by the wayside an occasional fig-tree, its trunk old and gnarled, and its few boughs supporting a scanty crown of leaves. Now there would come a little clump of stunted firs, and then a solitary farm-house, lying far out upon the wilds, and, it might

* *Paradise Regained*, book iv.

be, a little flock of sheep, watched by a shepherd with wolfish-looking dog, and musket slung at his back. But the more frequent objects on this plain are the stacks of mouldering brickwork which rise at short distances in a line with the road, on the right. They may have been temples or monumental tombs in their better days, but are now the lair of the fox, or the lurking-place of the brigand.

Towards twilight we came to Ponte Felice, which spans the Tiber, now the boundary of the States of the Church on the side of Tuscany. We found French troops on duty at the barrier. Presenting our passport to them, we passed under the dominion of the triple crown. Scarcely had we crossed the frontier when our vetturino, pulling up his horses, urged us to make this our halting-place for the night. The day, he said, was now past, and we were still three hours from Civita Castellana, the first town in the Papal States. He had bargained, however, to carry us thither on the first day, and, being desirous to reach Rome, if possible, on the second, we ordered him to go on. Climbing a low bank, and coming out again upon the level of the plain, the first glance made us almost repent that we had not listened to our *conducteur*, and made the little Borghetto, on the Tiber, our sleeping-place. The plain offered nothing to the eye but an unlimited expanse of blackness. Lowering clouds hung upon its skirts on all sides save the west, where a narrow belt of pale light still gleamed on the horizon. It could hardly have looked more sombre, even had the last night of time been descending upon the world. And then there was so much here to set the imagination at work. We knew this plain to be the sleeping-place of nations and

cities, the habitation of those doleful creatures which love the desert, "the dragons of the wilderness," and the resort of the brigand.

We pushed on, however. To add to our discomfort, our horses were tired, and began to slacken pace, despite the reiterated shouts of our vetturino, *Avanti, avanti!* vigorously enforced with his whip. We now became conscious that there was some bulky object before us on the plain. It would loom out at times upon us, darkening, with its towering mass, half the horizon, and then again it would retreat into the darkness and vanish. We guessed that it might be Monte Soracte. We seemed to be steering right upon it. Once or twice we heard the report of fire-arms. What could take the sportsman abroad at such an hour and in such a place? We had our suspicions, but took care not to express them. "Some herdsman of the Campagna," we said, "is discharging his musket." As for myself, who had, thirteen years before, passed three whole nights in succession on this same Campagna amid wild tempests of lightning and rain, this was nothing; but to my daughters, who with myself and vetturino formed our whole party, it was an aspect of Italian travel that was new, and somewhat unexpected. The hours wore away, however; and now a dark, irregular mass rose before us on the plain. It was Civita Castellana.

We were thankful to enter its gates after the wilds we had traversed. But, in sooth, Civita Castellana, despite its high-sounding name, promised no great things. It was drearily silent. Its streets were in utter darkness. As for inhabitants, bating a few figures which passed us muffled in cloaks, Civita Castellana might have been as empty of men, though standing

above ground, as those once renowned cities, its former companions, which now sleep below it. We trundled along the street, listening with a feeling of awe to the echoes of our vehicle, which seemed to rejoice in having the whole town to themselves. At last we drew up at the door of La Posta, where we had resolved to pass the night.

Strange, if one should not sleep here, where all else were buried in a dead sleep. It was the one occupation of the district. The men slept, their souls slept; the cities and villages slept; the very soil slept. It was as long as well as a dead slumber, for those who fell into it seemed never to awake. Here all had been sleeping for centuries, and here were they sleeping still. Was there no danger in lying down in a place like this, where the very air seemed to benumb one? Was there no risk of catching the general infection, and sleeping on, like all else in this enchanted region, and only awaking some centuries hence? We went to sleep, however, and, with the grey of morning, we awoke.

Day being come, we could now see, looking down from the windows of our hotel, the extraordinary nature of the site of Civita Castellana. The whole of the *Campagna di Roma* has, doubtless, been elevated by volcanic fires from the bottom of the Mediterranean. The plain may be described, generally, as a vast lava-bed, resting upon the tertiary gravels, and covered, in process of time, with the rich soil washed down from the Apennines. Through this general lava-field has been protruded a mass of red volcanic tufa, large enough to afford standing room for a city. On this plateau, which rises like an island above the plain, and is divided from it on all sides by deep ravines, was founded,

soon after the Trojan war, the old town of Falerium, one of the twelve cities of the Etruscan league. Of that city Civita Castellana is believed to be the successor. La Posta, which had been our sleeping place, stood on the brink of the northern ravine, and looking down we could see water-courses cut in the rock, and an ancient road winding through the defile, bordered with tombs, two arches sorely decayed, and other vestiges of the old Falerium.

But we must forward to Rome. Looking forth at the gates of Civita Castellana we could see that the morning had brought with it but a doubtful promise of fair weather; and here, let it be remarked, fair weather is of some importance, for the mourning earth needs all the brightness which even an Italian sun can give it. When the purple tints are on these wilds they are even beautiful; and when yonder peak of Apennine burns with vermillion the region borrows a grandeur which is not its own, just as the defaced and ruined pile puts on a fresh glory when the sun fringes it with gold. But this morning there was neither vermillion in the sky nor purple on the landscape. An expanse of leaden-coloured cloud covered the heavens. There was no singing of birds; there was no lowing of kine; there were no voices a-field of men and women at work. Those tokens of gladness which in one's own happy country attend the coming of the young day were all absent. Here the goings forth of the morning and evening rejoice not.

The plateau we were now traversing wore a covering of thistles and dried grass, with a thin sprinkling of here an occasional olive, and there an oak or fir-tree. Close beside us on the left was Soracte; now presenting

a single conical top, and now opening out into three fine peaks, according as we changed our position on the plain. For hours it seemed to accompany us. Homer has mentioned this hill in his epic; but even if the bard had not given it immortality, its own noble form and conspicuous position on the plain would have made it famous. We could see that there were gleams of golden light on its rugged sides. Behind us, in the far north, stood up those great mountains amid which our yesterday's course had lain; and although watery vapours swathed their feet, their tops were a-glow with the sunlight which was rained upon them from a patch of sky from which the cloud was beginning to be rolled back. From these signs our auguries of the weather were favourable; but before midday the promise of the morning passed away. The cloud closed in all round, and the landscape was now seen under the influence of a cold, cheerless light, which toned down every object. The hour was noon, but the dimness was that of twilight.

The melancholy wastes we were passing over, and which seemed to lengthen and expand the farther we advanced into them, had assuredly no need of this additional shade. They were sufficiently sombre before. The land was unnaturally silent. The ear listened for some sounds of life which might relieve the stillness, but nothing could we hear, save the echoes of our own voices, which began to sound unfamiliar and strange. The tokens of a present desolation, which lay all round us, were rendered, if possible, more impressive by the frequent intrusion of the manifest signs of a prosperity and splendour which had once existed here, but which have long since passed away. By the roadside were numerous substructions, from whose moss-grown ruins

the lizard crawled out; and masses of brickwork, with their marble casings peeled off, falling into mouldering heaps. We could see, moreover, at short distances, fragments of defaced inscriptions and mutilated figures lying about. Broken fountains, ruined towers, columns protruding through the soil, and caves hollowed out in the limestone rock which occasionally lined the road, the dwellings or perhaps the sepulchres of the ancient Etrurians, were among the objects that met the gaze. At the entrances of these places were stuck up little crucifixes, or shrines of the Madonna, lest the pilgrim's devotion should flag on his way to the "threshold of the Apostles."

At long intervals would be a poor village placed on the summit of a gentle elevation, or perched on the brink of one of those deep ravines that intersect the plain. To pass these villages, untouched by profound pity at the sight of the poverty and barbarism in which their inhabitants are steeped, is impossible. To us they seem the most affecting ruin on this theatre of ruins.

And then, as if to prompt the remembrance of the human species on a stage which had once nourished such a multitude of men, but where now mankind seemed all but extinct, there might be seen a solitary herdsman striding across the plain, his person enveloped in the ample folds of his dark cloak, or tending his herd of swine, or driving home his few buffaloes, his legs cased in cow-hide, and his face shaded with the broad slouching brim of his cone-shaped hat. To add to the general dreariness of the scene, there would rise at times out of the Mediterranean a cloud blacker than the others, which, dragging a trail of shower across the plain, would empty itself

upon the many-peaked towering Apennine, which, with ample sweep, enclosed the Campagna.

There was but one great object on this plain—now that Soracte had fallen into the rear—which was able to rivet the attention; and certainly it did wield a strange fascination. Wherever the eye might wander it was sure in a few minutes to find its way back to that object, as if drawn thither by some mysterious and secret spell. At a vast distance before us—it might be about twenty miles—a little black ball seemed to rise out of the earth, and to float above the plain. What could it be? so far off, and yet of shape so determinate and so distinctly visible! It might be a speck of cloud! or it might be a mere creation of the fancy! It kept its place nevertheless. As mile after mile was passed it grew bigger and taller, till at last it stood proudly up, and then there could be no mistaking it. *La cupola!* exclaimed our vetturino. Yes, it was the very dome which the Papal Europe of the sixteenth century had lavished its wealth, and Michael Angelo his genius, to create. A few miles nearer, and Monte Mario, adjoining St. Peter's, began to rise prominently above the plain. A few miles nearer still, and we could trace a dark ragged line stretching away on the east of the dome, and looking like a broken ridge or mound on the surface of the plain. It resolved itself, as we drew towards it, into the walls and towers of a great city. It rose spectre-like, amidst the silence and blackness of that wilderness; but we could not doubt what city it was. The sight recalled the familiar lines of Byron,—and his description of Rome is the best in our language, combining as it does topographical accuracy and poetic beauty, and with the same strokes drawing

a double picture, depicting at once the physical ruin and the moral woe of that renowned city,—

“The Niobe of nations ! there she stands,
Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe ;
An empty urn within her withered hands,
Whose holy dust was scattered long ago ;
The Scipio’s tomb contains no ashes now ;
The very sepulchres lie tenantless
Of their heroic dwellers : dost thou flow,
Old Tiber ! through a marble wilderness ?
Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle her distress.”

It was at the gates of this “Niobe of nations” that we now stood.

Our journey over the Campagna was now ended : the impressions it had made upon the mind were never to be effaced. Ever as its doleful image rises before us, we are compelled to ask, What angel is it who has passed over his plain, and, with the blast of utter destruction, has swept from its bosom the pride of its martial populations, the ancient glory of its walled cities, and the rich luxuriance of its vineyards and orange groves, and, burying in the dust all the monuments of its wealth, and all the trophies of its power, has sown it with salt, and made it like the Sodom and Gomorrah of sacred story ?

CHAPTER XXVI.

ROME—THE CITY AND ITS RULERS.

IN 1851, on a dark December night, I quitted Rome by the Flaminian gate, amid torrents of rain and incessant gleams of lightning, with neither the expectation nor the desire of ever seeing it again. A few hours afterwards, when slowly wending our way up the heights on the north of the Tiber, I looked back to have my last sight, as I supposed, of Rome. On the battered plain beneath glistened numerous pools of water; while through rifts in the clouds a slanting ray of fiery light broke from the newly-risen sun, which struck red upon the roofs and domes of the city, making them look as if on fire, and changing the aspect of the floods around into the appearance of blood. There was a tragic grandeur in the scene which made me well content that it should be my last view of Rome. And yet my last it was not; for now I stood once more at the Porta del Popolo. There are seasons when the current of time seems to run with unwonted rapidity, and such were the thirteen years which had passed since the night on which I made my exit at this old gate. Should I find Rome such as I left it? I was impatient to know if any, and what, changes had passed upon the old city.

The first glance inside the walls showed me that change had been there. The Vatican is still just where it was, but the material city is a little a-head of the point

at which it stood in 1851. That tide of material progress, which, as every traveller must have observed, is stirring the whole continent of Europe so powerfully, has been felt even within that city, whose motto is immobility. A great struggle it must have cost the cardinals, but necessity has no law, and so, in those few matters—and at Rome they are very few—which do not impinge upon canon law, these worthy men have yielded to the spirit of the age. Let us specify the reforms which have been conceded.

Gas is now used in Rome. The oil-lamps, which, suspended at vast distances from one another, twinkled so innocently in a darkness which they could not dispel, have been swept away, and now the Corso, the piazza of St. Peter's, and almost all the streets and shops of the Eternal city, are lighted with gas like those of any other town. The government, after a stout resistance of twenty years, have, too, conceded the point of railways. Two lines touch Rome, the one from Civita Vecchia, and the other from Naples. Strange it is to hear the steam-whistle mingling its shrill notes with the solemn and continuous booming of the bells of Rome, and the snortings of the engine disturbing the immemorial silence around the baths of Titus and the grave of Horace on the Esquiline.

The streets, too, are better paved, some of them may be said even to be clean ; although, as I had afterward occasion to know, those remote from the Corso are still lying, as aforetime, unswept and unwashed, save by the rains, and once or twice in the year by Old Father Tiber, who benevolently goes on pilgrimage for that very purpose. The officials are more obliging than was their wont. The beggars, who roamed in every street

and lane, have been compelled to hide their rags from public view, and the few that do venture abroad have caught the grace of a rare modesty, in compliance, it is understood, with stringent regulations from headquarters. A few new book-shops have been opened; for, to the best of my recollection, there was but *one* in the Rome of 1851; and although a volume, calling itself "Sacra Bibbia," is ostentatiously stuck up in the windows, this is not the Holy Bible, which is even more stringently forbidden than before, but a compilation or *melange* of the histories and facts of Scripture, such as Rome judges it safe for her people to read. The population have now a more civilised look, and appear less like men who had come into the world about the same time with their city, and had passed down with it to the present day almost unchanged in dress, in looks, in sentiment, in everything. In short, Rome looked a half-century younger than when I last saw it.

Even so long ago as the times of Gregory XVI., the Romans complained of the obstructive policy of the popes, and felt the utter hopelessness of industrial progress so long as the government of the country should centre in the Vatican. They tell at Rome how, on the death of Gregory, Pasquin gave piquant expression to the popular sentiment on that point. "It hath pleased God," said Pasquin, "to take to himself our late pontiff, Gregory, of blessed memory. He had not gone far on the road to Paradise, when he was met by the Apostle Peter, who had kindly come to show him the way. But Gregory, being a heavy man, and the road long, began to complain of being tired. 'I am sorry, my dear Gregory,' said Peter, condoling with him, 'that you should have to go all this long way on foot, but your holi-

ness would not allow a railroad to be constructed. But stay,' continued Peter, 'let us turn in here and rest awhile.' They entered at a wicket that stood on the roadside, and found themselves in Purgatory, where Gregory met many old friends, who were delighted to see him, and to hear from him all the news of Rome. After a while, he was reminded by Peter that it was time to resume their journey, to which Gregory, footsore though he was, was noways loath. After walking many a weary league, the travellers came at last in sight of Paradise. 'Why is it,' inquired Gregory, 'that I can see no angels on the wall, and none of the popes, my predecessors, at the gate to bid me welcome?' 'They have not the least notion that you are on the road, my dear Gregory,' rejoined Peter; 'you know you would not permit a telegraph to be put up. But here we are at the gate. Give us your key and let us go in.' Gregory, after long fumbling in his fob, produced a key, but it would not unfasten the lock. It was the key of his wine-cellar." Gregory was said to have dearly loved a flask of Orvieto, which his physicians compelled him to change for a bottle of champagne. Pasquin goes on to relate that the leader, who by this time was growing impatient, and somewhat angry, called Gregory a "slow coach," and opening the door with his own key, went in, leaving Gregory on the outside, where, alas! he was lost in the fog. Some will have it that Gregory is standing at the gate till this hour, waiting till his successor, Pio Nono, shall bring the right key; but this must be a mistake, since it would imply that since the time of Gregory, neither cardinal nor priest has entered Paradise.

The Rome of 1851 was a dunghill of filth, and a

lazar-house of disease. What is worse, it was a dungeon of terror-stricken, cowering beings, about thirty thousand of whom were imprisoned in the jails, and the rest within the city-walls, which they dared not quit. A great scandal arose. Travellers were not slow on their return to their own country to proclaim the abominations, physical and moral, which they had found in the "city of the popes." The cardinals saw that the fame of Rome was filling Europe. Bishops, too, from Paris and other cities, where ordinary attention is paid to health and cleanliness, found Rome, doubtless, a very holy city, but its effluvia was somewhat too strong to be quite agreeable, and hinted the necessity of doing something to abate it. The cardinals submitted, as we have said, to have the streets swept; the *non possumus* did not there stand in their way: but nothing could induce them to have the jails opened. But while we accord due praise to the cardinals, who in this heroically conquered their proverbial love of filth, we must not be unjust to the French. Their presence in Rome has had a good deal to do with the improved sanitary condition and embellishment of the Eternal city. No people in the world have a finer eye for effect than the French; and in a variety of particulars one can trace at Rome the influence of that artistic taste which has made their own capital of Paris, in this respect, the marvel and the model of continental Europe. But we pass to greater things.

A fortnight before my visit to Rome, a little cloud appeared on the summit of northern Apennine. It attracted all eyes in Italy, but nowhere did its appearance awaken so deep an interest as in Rome, where some regarded it with hope, and others with

terror. It was said that, by solemn convention between the Emperor of France and the King of Italy, in two years the French occupation of Rome would cease. So ran the decree, which now appeared as suddenly in the political firmament of Italy, as the *Mene Mene Tekel Upharsin*, which the fingers of a man's hand wrote upon the palace-wall of Babylon. When the decree was told to the pope, his countenance changed, and his thoughts troubled him. Summoning his counsellors and all his wise men, he desired them to read the writing, and make known the interpretation. They did their best to decipher the mysterious decree. Napoleon, said some, has numbered your kingdom and finished it. Nay, said others, *esto perpetuo*, he opens to the Papacy a new and more glorious era.

It may well be imagined that these doubtful and contradictory responses did but little towards quieting the disturbed mind of the pontiff. He rose from his throne, as did the King of Nineveh when the words of Jonah were reported to him, but not like the King of Nineveh, to put on sackcloth and sit in ashes. Entering his chariot, he rode in pontifical pomp through the streets of Rome to the church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva, surrounded by his Swiss halberdiers and French zouaves, and followed by a sumptuous train of cardinals and priests. Arrived at this high temple of his worship, he cast himself at the feet of her whom, by the decree of 1854, he had exalted to the throne of deity—placed, as De Boni says, in the very bosom of the Trinity—and supplicated her powerful intervention in this dread crisis of his fate. He published a decree, calling on all Rome to go with him to the feet of Mary, if haply by cries and tears

they might prevail with her to avert from the throne of God's vicar the dangers that threatened it. The proclamation is a document worth preserving, and I give it as it appeared on the walls of Rome, only begging the reader to mark that, whereas the attack which the pope was now endeavouring to ward off came from the "Elder Son of the Church," the pontiff resents it by aiming a blow at Protestantism. The pontifical placard ran as follows :—

"Parishioners, that the most holy Mary, when invoked with faith, has always shown herself a help of Christians, a destroyer of heresies, and a shield against hostile phalanxes, is sufficiently attested by calling to mind the well-known facts of the Albigenses in France, of Sobieski at Vienna in Austria, of Colonna at Lepanto, and of the triumphal return of Pius VII. to Rome. To Mary, therefore, the church has always had recourse in every persecution, in every danger, and has been heard. To Mary it has again recourse to-day, in the heavy persecution which it endures at the present moment—a persecution in which cruel force, not less than fraud, is employed; in which every sense of morality and every feeling of religion are sought to be outraged; and in which the infidelity of false philosophers is substituted for the Catholic faith, and the licence of unbridled passions for the morality of the gospel. For this end the cardinal vicar, by order of his holiness, enjoins on the arch confraternities of Rome public processions, intended to invoke the aid of Mary, hoping that the faithful population will unite in this act of religion and expiation, and will entertain the confidence that this is the celestial weapon which secures the triumphs of religion and the peace of the

world. If, therefore, you love religion and the church, if you love your own peace not less than that of the world, you will take part in these public prayers and penitentiary processions on Tuesday, the 4th October, at four p.m. precisely. The arch confraternity of San Rocco, in obedience to the orders of the holy father, will set out from the church to walk in procession to Santa Maria Sopra Minerva. Let us join, O parishioners, in this penitentiary procession, and raise our devout prayers to Mary, along with our mother the church, and Mary will hear us. In the morning it would be well to take the holy communion, and there will be a general one at half-past seven. You, on similar occasions, formed the edification of all: and now that the church expects at your hands this act of faith and piety, ought you not to perform it? Mary awaits you, because she wishes to grant your prayers. Come then devoutly, and you will experience her assistance.

(Signed) "N. FREDIANI,
Parish Priest."

Such was the proclamation. It was published in all the parishes of Rome, with, of course, the necessary verbal alterations. It illustrates one thing, and that is a thing of some consequence, namely, that let the event be what it may, or come whence it may, if it menace the Papal see with evil, Rome is sure to see in it the working of Protestantism, and will, as far as she is able, visit it upon the head of Protestant England. Nor is this, as some might take it to be, mere reckless blundering. It is a profound intuition. It is the spirit of the Papacy, in the exercise of its preternatural insight, singling out from amongst a multitude of apparent antagonists, that one antagonist which alone

it dreads—the Christianity which the Reformation restored to us. And Rome is right in laying at the door of the Reformation, and, by consequence, of its friends at this day, all the reverses and calamities that now afflict her : for there is no truth more sure than that the political situation of the Europe of to-day is, by a long chain of causes, the result of the great revolution of the sixteenth century.

My arrival in Rome was so timed, without any arrangement on my part, that I had the good fortune to witness this act of penitence or devotion, or whatever it might be called. It attracted numerous gazers even in this city of pontifical shows. First of all, surrounded by gleaming steel and prancing steeds, rode the pope. He was followed by the carriages of his ministers, bedecked, like that of their master, with scarlet trappings, and drawn by coal-black horses. Then flowed on, in one long unbroken procession, all orders of regulars and seculars, from the purple prelate to the cowed monk and the white-veiled nun. The show was enlivened by every variety of ecclesiastical costume—the black robe of the cure and the white alb of the mass priest, the brown frock of the Capuchin and the white mantle of the Carmelite. Some trod daintily in slippers garnished with silver buckles, others came onward with naked feet thrust into sandals. Some wore gold chains on their breast, others had their loins begirt with hempen cords. Some bore candles, others carried little crucifixes ; some chanted hymns, others sung a low dirge or wail, more in keeping with the penitential character of the procession, and the enjoined exercises of the day. The Minorites formed one of the more striking features of the affair. They

wore a mask of black serge, which enveloped their persons from head to foot, and left no part of them visible but the eyes, which glared out through two holes. They were hideous, ghost-like figures, and as they passed on with their doleful chaunt, and their dark eyes peering out with fiery lustre, one's flesh seemed to creep, as if approached by an unearthly thing, or brought into contact with a spirit from the tomb.

The procession swept in at the ample portal of the Minerva, and I entered with it. I looked for the pope, but was told that he had retired behind the altar to say his prayers. A dense crowd of priests and French officers were clustered before the altar, while around it burned, literally, a thousand tapers. A motley and miscellaneous crowd occupied the spacious marble floor. There were priests on their knees, with hands clasped, eyes closed, and faces upturned with a peculiar air of knavish devotion upon their features. There were lay devotees, also on bent knee, mumbling their prayers. There were a few *contadini*, of whom it were hard to say whether their dress or their devotion were the more unsophisticated. There were travellers of various nations elbowing their way to have a look at the pope. There were little groups of *fachini* and other idlers, attracted from the street; and to crown the confusion, there were some score of beggars soliciting alms; so that what with the muttered prayers of devotees, the whine of mendicants, and the pushing and elbowing of sight-seers, the worship was not remarkably edifying or orderly. It may be doubted whether Mary would thank the pope for bringing together so questionable an assemblage to do her honour.

The pope now reappeared from behind the altar, for

his intercession of the Virgin did not last more than two or three minutes. Then came a clash of arms ; a rush to the door ; a mounting of the *guardia nobile* ; a rattle of wheels, an arm thrust out of the window of the pontifical carriage, showing two fingers and the thumb extended, and which were kept waving for a few minutes over the heads of the people ; and now all was over. I had seen the prophecy illustrated : " And it shall come to pass, when it is seen that Moab is weary on the high place, that he shall come to his sanctuary to pray, but he shall not prevail."

Alas for the poor pope ! I take him to be a man who is eminently sincere, and exceedingly in earnest. I saw him for the first time in 1851, and if Rome has grown younger since that year, it is not so with Pio Nono. Cares, neither few nor light, have bowed him nearer to the earth, and planted on his brow wrinkles not a few. In 1851 he was corpulent, no doubt, but his corpulency did not seem a burden to him in the least. He walked with ambling gait ; he had a fresh colour, a twinkling, laughing eye ; everything about him betokened a man who ate well and slept well. His face bore a good-natured smile ; in truth, it was the one smiling face in Rome. He had just returned from Gaeta, after the storm of 1848, never doubting that a new and glorious era was opening upon the Papacy. He said, or seemed to say—

" Now is the winter of our discontent
Made glorious summer by this sun of " France ;
" And all the clouds that lower'd upon our house
In the deep bosom of the ocean buried."

But these clouds have gathered blacker and bigger than before ; and the smile has fled for ever from the

face of Pius ix. His features are deadly pale, his hair is blanched, his corpulency has increased, and weighs him down, his steps are slow and dragging, and there is a deep settled weariness and melancholy upon his countenance which were enough, one should think, to move to compassion his bitterest foe.

My last day in Rome was All Saints' Day. It was passed in the Sistine Chapel. Along with some hundred or two of other travellers, I was there shut up for three hours with the pope and cardinals. The cardinals are quite a study. I do not know that I have ever seen a finer collection of heads. They were massy, and finely formed, and the face in each instance bore the corresponding expression. One felt as if the creations of the great masters had walked out of the canvas, and stepped down upon the floor of the Sistine. There they sat on either side of the chapel, in a long red row, their servants in purple at their feet, and their heads bent over their breviaries, unless when they lifted them, as they often did, to cast a glance of conscious pleasure upon the spectators, or to exchange smiles and bows with one another. The reflection that must strike the spectator in presence of the assembled cardinals is, what vast capacity in this body! But it is not capacity of the highest order—of commanding genius, or grand conception. It is the capacity of adroit management, of skilful fetch, of ready resource, which, however, when gathered into a focus, and set working, may be a very formidable power indeed. Craft, if one might judge from the twinkle in the eye, and the stealthy nimbleness of the frame, is the predominating talent of the cardinalate—but a craft of exquisite edge and inimitable polish, like “a sharp razor working deceitfully.”

There was one among them whom the eye singled out at once as markedly different from the rest. The others were obese; he was slim and lithe. Their faces were smirking and elate; his was thoughtful and resolute. He looked a man still in mid-life; his hair was dark; he was not tall, although his slight figure and erect posture made him seem above the average height. He stood at the head of the row, fronting the papal chair, his robe folded about him in the fashion of an old Roman. His dark, deep-set eye, glanced out from beneath a defiant brow, gazing into empty space. He was the pope's prime minister, Antonelli.

He took part in the ceremonies with the rest, but not as they. With heads erect and beaming faces did the other cardinals step down into the floor, their servants bearing their long scarlet trains, and gracefully did they sweep round the pope, or marshal themselves proudly in a row before him, or bow down to kiss his slipper. This dark mysterious man descended to the floor with the rest, but having gone through his part, he returned to his place, and there, his arms akimbo, and his robe drawn round him, he drew himself up, and again stood looking away into the far distance. There he stood, the animating soul of a spiritual empire whose subjects are spread from farthest Japan to the remotest west. Where were his thoughts at that moment? Far away, it might be, from the Sistine, in those distant regions where toil his emissaries amid barbarous tribes, or in the palaces of Europe, where the courtly nuncios bow before thrones which they are planning to undermine. Or was he essaying to read the mysterious scroll blazoned on the political walls of Europe, the Franco-Italian convention? One could imagine him the great

Julius, risen from the dead, and revolving new schemes of conquest, or—to descend to humbler comparisons—a brigand perched on his mountain-peak, sweeping, with keen eye, the plain beneath, before stooping upon his prey.

One other man there was, of whom we may affirm—although the affirmation may seem incredible—that he was without mystery and without guile. We mean the pontiff. No one of ordinary penetration can see him for a moment without reading his character. His face is the unyielding visage of a bigot, terribly in earnest, sternly and unflinchingly conscientious. In short, he looked a walking encyclical; and no wonder, seeing the encyclical had then been resolved upon, and was at that very time in the act of concoction *in petto*; and now that it has seen the light, and has visited most of the countries of the world in its character of a pontifical decree, most surely infallible, it bears the very image and likeness of the man who gave it being. It is, in fact, the pope's *alter ego*. We have no doubt that the pope is perfectly sincere in his belief that the whole world has gone astray, and that he himself—a very few others excepted—is the one righteous man now on the earth. The reader may infer what a conscience like this might lead to in certain circumstances. The conscience of Charles v. reproached him in his last days because he had not burned Luther. The New Zealand chief died conscience-burdened for not having killed the missionary who had perverted so many of his people; and our own “bloody Mary” spent her last breath in imploring forgiveness, not for burning multitudes of her best subjects, but for not making fuller restitution of the abbey lands to the church.

CHAPTER XXVII.

TYRANNY OF GOVERNMENT—POLITICAL AND SOCIAL
DEGRADATION OF THE PEOPLE.

THE government of the pontiff is a theocracy. Let the reader try to understand what this imports as applied to the Papal States. The pontifical government is not the government of a mere man, or of a human code ; it is the government of God himself—God in the person of his vicar. It is, or professes to be, as real a theocracy as that which was set up in Judea of old. Nay, it is a more absolute and irresponsible government than was the Jewish theocracy ; for, although Jehovah was the king of the Israelitish state, he gave the Jews a written law, the Old Testament, and by that law the king was bound to govern, so that in substance and fact the Jews lived under a constitution. It is the earliest example of constitutional government in history. But while the Old Testament, the representative of Jehovah, the real monarch of the Jewish kingdom, limited the prerogative of the prince, and defined the rights of his subjects, it is otherwise with the ruler of the Papal States. He “ as God ” sitteth in the midst of his kingdom, ruling it according to his own irresponsible will. He is the maker of his own law ; and that law neither sets limits to his powers nor grants rights to his subjects. He exercises, in measure

altogether absolute and unbounded, both the temporal and the spiritual authority. And this idea of theocracy is most fully carried out into all parts of the government. No one can take part in the administration unless he be a member of the clerical body. No one can be a member of the state unless he be also a member of the church, for there church and state are identical, or rather, we should say, the state is completely sunk in the church. No one can hold property, nay, no one can claim a right to liberty or life, unless he be in communion with the church. There church membership is the foundation of all rights, and the tenure on which are held all privileges—necessarily so under a theocracy. The unhappy man who falls from communion with the church, necessarily falls from his rights of citizenship, and becomes a civil as well as a spiritual outlaw. In fine, the Papal States being governed *by* the church, are necessarily governed *for* the church. Science, letters, mechanical improvements, social ameliorations, political reforms—everything, in short, opposed to the existence of this theocracy—are stringently excluded. The *non possumus*, like the flaming sword at the gate of Eden, turns every way to guard the holy soil of Catholicism. Such is the theory of the pontifical government. We beg our readers to keep it in mind as we proceed, for it is this which gives their true significance to the facts we are to narrate.

The States of the Church are now dwindled to the most pitiful dimensions. What remains to the pope is as near as possible what was wont to be known as the Duchy of Rome, and the Patrimony of Peter. The first, the duchy, to wit, was conferred on Stephen II.

by Pepin of France, in the eighth century. It comprehended the line of coast from Terracina to the mouth of the Tiber, including the Pontine marshes, and the Sabine and Volscian hills. The Patrimony of Peter was bequeathed to the church by the Countess Matilda, the intimate friend of Hildebrand. It extended from the mouth of the Tiber to the Tuscan frontier, including the Lake of Bolsena. The united population of these states is 431,000 ; that of Rome 120,000. But we are to bear in mind that Roman statistics are not remarkable for their exactness.

The formal number of the cardinals is seventy ; for such was the number of the first disciples sent forth by our Lord. The annual allowance of each is 4,500 Roman scudi, or nearly £1,200 of our money ; but to this sum must be added the rich perquisites of their numerous offices.

When the cardinals assemble with the pope they constitute a consistory. Their office is not to deliberate and vote, but to assent. The pope governs, the cardinals administer ; the theory being that the former is the fountain of infallibility, the latter the organs of its exercise.

In virtue of their office as administrators, the cardinals form twenty-three *congregazioni*. Of these seventeen are ecclesiastical, and six civil. The former direct the whole administration of the church, and the latter regulate all the branches of the state. It were tedious to enumerate these several congregations, with the affairs falling under each. The first is the " Congregation of the Holy Office," or Inquisition. It meets every Monday. It presides over all similar congregations throughout Christendom. Its laws are the same as in

the thirteenth century, but the times have compelled a modification in their execution. The prison of the Inquisition, which stands on the right of the Vatican, and which was used so late as 1848, is now shut up; and the dungeons of St. Angelo, on the left of the Vatican, are also now disused. This, however, matters little, seeing that every prison in Rome and in the States of the Church is at the disposal of the Congregation of the Holy Office.

Of the four secretaries, the first is the *Segretaria di Stato*. He is the pope's secretary in both temporal and spiritual affairs. He is a cardinal, but may or may not be a priest. Every functionary in the state is subject to his absolute will and pleasure. When the pontiff is a weak man the secretary of state is what the mayors of the palace were at the fall of the Merovingians. This lucrative post has generally been held by relatives of the pope, whose descendants enjoy at this day the harvests of their ancestors. It is creditable to the present pope that none of his relations are hoarding riches at the expense of the state. Cardinal Antonelli has long held this high office. Antonelli is sprung from a humble family of the Abruzzi; his grandfather was a brigand, converted, some will have it, by the missionaries who visit that part of the country; but others say that he turned king's evidence, and betrayed his band. His uncle is still better known to fame; his exploits as a brigand being celebrated in his country's songs. His sister came to Rome, for the first time, a few years ago. She appeared in the costume of her district, known as that of the *ciociara*, which she quickly changed for the newest fashion from Paris. Antonelli himself is said to be worth some million or

two of scudi, which he is also said to have judiciously invested in England. Strange that the champion of orthodoxy should have laid up his treasure in a land of heresy!

We mention also the *Segretaria di Brevi Pontifici*, or pontifical briefs. The pope's letters of Grace of Dispensation, when not authenticated with the leaden seal, called a *Bue* or bull, are termed briefs. They are written on fine parchment, and sealed with the fisherman's ring, the same, it is affirmed, which was worn by Peter.*

Whether Peter wore a ring we shall not determine; certain it is that he never had an army. His successor, however, has one. In June, 1861, the pontifical force amounted to 9,500 men of all arms, distributed into eleven regiments. Desertions have since reduced this number to about 5,000. The most remarkable part of this force is the regiment of Zouaves, composed of what are called, in pontifical phraseology, "the faithful of all nations." Those who know it closely, affirm that it may more truly be termed the "scum of all nations." Swindlers, *chevaliers d'industrie*, bank-note forgers, outlaws, and jail-birds from various countries, compose this "illustrious" corps. It has happened that a respectable youth has found his way into the papal Zouaves, but discovering the sort of *canaille* he had joined, he soon went over to the rifles, or, it might be, to the dragoons. If he found the fatigue

* Many of the details in this chapter are taken from *The Britannia*, a MS. magazine, edited in Leghorn in 1861, and containing letters from Rome descriptive of the political and social institutions of the Eternal city. The author begs to thank the editors for so obligingly permitting him to make use of the information contained in this volume, which exists only in MS.

here too much, he quickly changed into the artillery. If this last did not suit, he deserted the service altogether.

A little book, translated into four languages, was distributed among the soldiers, extolling the cause for which they were in arms, and lauding their bravery to the skies. "Brave soldiers," so it began, "two armies find themselves face to face; and never in mortal times were hostile armies more opposed, we shall not say by interests, but by principles radically antagonistic, than are these two armies. The one fights for religion, for justice, for order, social and domestic; the other for sacrilegious impiety, for overbearing injustice, for social no less than domestic rebellion. The first of the two armies, combating for the church, combats for civilisation, for liberty, for the true dignity of man, socially and individually. . . . What mortal hand ever defended a more holy cause? You shield with your hearts the holy Catholic church, your mother, betrayed by deceit, assassinated by the tyranny of her unnatural children, who desire to see her stripped naked, weakened, degraded, and hardly restrain their parricidal hands from lacerating her heart. She has entrusted the defence of their immortal rights to your valour and swords. It was not in adulation, but in strict truth that it was said of you, 'In our days you are the first soldiers in the earth.'"

We have already described the changes on the surface which the city of Rome has undergone, and which have made it more like a whited sepulchre than ever. Underneath there continues to flow the same steady current of cruel tyranny, of rampant corruption and abuse, of official venality, of private profligacy, and of

stern, unflinching opposition to every reform. In proof let us adduce a few facts.

The papal government is at once the most tolerant and the most tyrannical on the face of the earth. It will indulge its subjects to the utmost, provided only they consent to live without knowledge and without rights. But let them show a disposition to enjoy these blessings—in short, to rise to the dignity of men—and its vengeance is prompt and terrible. The prisons of the Papal States are an affecting record on this head. Tens of thousands of wretched sufferers people these abodes. So says public report at Rome; and if this be an over-statement, as the authorities affirm, they have only themselves to blame, for none who enter these dungeons ever return to tell what they have seen or suffered there.

The pope blamed the King of Naples for setting Poerio and his companions at liberty, "for," said he, "it will create scandal." The pontiff has taken care that there shall be no similar ground for scandal in his own case. Not one political prisoner, it is said, has he liberated since his return from Gaeta. "Is this the man . . . that made the earth as a wilderness . . . that opened not the house of his prisoners"! Some few have found their way back to the world from other papal prisons, through sentence of exile or some similar award; but as their liberation was doubtless contemplated from the first, it may be conjectured that these prisoners were not permitted to see the worst. Still some little of these horrors has come to light. The cells are said to be indescribably filthy; the air, from overcrowding, suffocating and pestilential; and the society so arranged as to be a source of excruciating

suffering to the political prisoners. These are often men of blameless life, and some of them are of high social position; nevertheless, they are shut up with robbers and murderers. The malefactors, moreover, enjoy privileges denied to the state prisoners. The former are permitted to correspond with their friends, and sometimes to see them in prison; the latter, from the moment the prison-door closes behind them, cease to be seen of men. Their friends can learn nothing of their fate, whether they still live, and if not, by what miserable end they have perished. Of the many thousands who have passed within these terrible gates since 1849, the fate will never be known till the great day. When earth and sea give up their dead, then too will the pope's dungeons give up theirs.

Our consul, Mr. Severn, expressed to me his belief that the popular estimate of the number of the political prisoners—some twelve thousand out of a population of a little over half a million—was too high; but, added he, "I have nothing to do to draw inferences; I can only note facts." One fact which had astonished him not a little was that the spacious building of the San Michele, on the right bank of the Tiber, had the other day been converted into a prison. The San Michele is a huge pile of three storeys, built by Innocent XII. It had been used as a school of art, and some of the first engravers of Paris were trained in it; but the heresy of revolutionary ideas having broken out there, it was closed as a school and opened as a prison. It would contain about two thousand prisoners, and it is difficult to resist the conclusion that if the other prisons had not been full this new one would not have been thought of.

"Come with me," said to me, one day, a resident in Rome, happily not a subject of the pope—"Come with me, and I will introduce you to a friend of mine, a man of liberal ideas, and a reader of his Bible, though secretly, for fear of the priests." I went with him to the house of Signor ——. The door-bell was answered by a female servant. In reply to our inquiry whether her master was at home, she stated that he was not—that he had gone to the country. To hear of one in Rome going to the country is something unusual, for there the country means a wilderness occupied by few except swine-herds. On being further pressed, she told us plainly that her master was in prison. A few weeks before the police had come, had seized all his papers, and taken him and them away with him. What a city, in which there is but a step between one's home and a dungeon!

How small a matter may send one to prison in Rome! An American actress who resided in the Eternal city, having occasion to go to Paris for the season, left her house and other effects in charge of the English consul. Soon after her departure her coachman was carried off to jail, and Mr. Severn found that his friend's carriage and horses were "going to the dogs." He waited on the papal authorities, by whom he was received very courteously. "Oh!" said the functionary, "the young man has been guilty of a great crime; see what was found upon his person," taking at the same time from his desk a medal of Garibaldi, the size of one's fingernail, and showing it to the consul. "I am an Englishman," replied Mr. Severn, "and don't understand that sort of thing." "Then here is another proof of his guilt," was the rejoinder, and he unfolded a paper

containing subscriptions for erecting a monument to Cavour. The poor coachman had put down his name on the fatal paper for a paul. The man's guilt was clear; he possessed a medal of Garibaldi, and he had subscribed fivepence towards a Cavour monument; and for these great crimes was he now condemned to a three-years' imprisonment. Being a papal subject, the English consul could do nothing for him.

There came a Maltese to Rome with his wife and two children. He had extended his wanderings as far as Jerusalem, and now he was exhibiting a panorama of the Holy City in a little box which stood in one of the public piazzas. It occurred to Mr. Severn that as the man spoke English he might act as an interpreter on the railway works at Velletri, where his services in that capacity were much needed. Having obtained for him the appointment, he went in search of him to communicate the good news. The Maltese, however, was not to be found: he was not on the piazza where his little box used to be; in short, himself, his wife, and children had all suddenly and mysteriously disappeared. The consul guessed but too surely what had become of him. So, going to the police, he demanded the man and his family as English subjects. The police protested that they knew nothing of him. In a day or two, however, the man himself turned up. He had been in prison, as Mr. Severn had not doubted he was, but he had been imprisoned, the police assured the man, at Mr. Severn's instance. The consul went back to the prefecture of police to demand explanations. The officials met him on the stairs with a profusion of apologies. Pushing past the subordinates, he made his way to the head of the body. "It was all a mistake,"

that official begged the consul to believe. Mr. Severn asked for a sight of the commitment. The man who wrote it could not be found, and Mr. Severn was compelled to be content with the fact that his *protégé* had been released. But what crime, asks the reader, had brought down the vengeance of the papal government upon the poor Maltese showman? He had chattered one day something about the ex-King of Naples; and to teach him and others that the reputation of this worthy must not be blown upon, he was swept off to prison. Had he been a subject of the pope, he would have been in prison still. Happily for himself, he was an English subject, and so he was liberated; but the appointment at Velletri was lost.

These are a few samples selected from a multitude. If such trifles provoke the vengeance of the pontifical government, we may well imagine with what terrible rigour graver offences are visited.

Religion has been termed "the cheap defence of nations." Why is it, then, that in Rome, where the proportion of priests is greater than in any other city of Europe, the police are also more numerous? The peace of the pontifical city is maintained by some 5,000 police, and 16,000 French soldiers. This is, as near as may be, a man-at-arms for each family. The police are divided into "open" and "secret." The former wear uniform, and patrol the streets at all hours of the day and night. There is besides a numerous body of French soldiers constantly on duty. It is sometimes asked, "Why do the Romans submit to so tyrannical a government as the pontifical?" That question is sufficiently answered by another, "Would they better themselves by rising?" No; they would but swell the list of

former massacres by new victims. They must patiently wait till a turn in the tide of European politics shall bring them an opportunity of striking a blow with advantage.

The cardinal vicar has in his service a body of secret police, amounting, it is said, to betwixt 5,000 and 6,000. They wear no uniform, and are in no way distinguishable from ordinary citizens. They are paid from five to six pauls a day; a large sum in Rome. Most of these men, before entering this corps, have made their acquaintance with the prisons in another capacity. In fact, they have been taken from the galleys to serve the government. Their former chief was the notorious Nardoni, a worthy head of a worthy band. Their power may be said to be absolute. They can enter any house at any hour. They are not required to tell who sent them, or to show warrant from any one. They may apprehend whomsoever they please. Rome may be said to be entirely in their hands; and thus there are large numbers of innocent persons in prison. But no one ever sees a prisoner led through the streets. One may live weeks and months in Rome without seeing anything amiss. The machine of the papal tyranny works in deepest silence. There is no city in Europe where all that ought not to be seen is more studiously kept out of view. The bells ring; the priest passes by in his long robe; the cardinal dashes past in his gilded chariot; the sight-seers of all nations crowd the museums and churches; the brilliant sun gilds the scene with glory, from the dome of St. Peter's to the white town that gleams afar, hung like a nest on the crest of "purple Apennine;" and one no more thinks of the haggard faces in the prisons, and the broken hearts in the houses

of Rome, than one thinks of the rotting bones in the sepulchre beneath the flowers or the marbles which conceal them from the sight.

The city, moreover, is full of spies. Not a word can be spoken within the circuit of its old walls but its echoes reach the Vatican. Every family has been given in charge to some one who duly reports at head-quarters all that is said and done in it. I was one day at the table of an English gentleman who has resided some years in Rome. "The man-servant who opened the door to you," said he, "and who waited on us at dinner, is a government spy." I expressed a little surprise. "Nay," said he, "I would rather be taken care of by one who has some motive to be discreet, than be put into the hands of one whom I have no means of conciliating." "Observe this man," said a friend with whom I was walking one day. The person to whom my attention was called was within a few paces of us; he was elegantly dressed; had a black bushy beard, and a face on which the "gentleman" and the "gentleman's gentleman" were contending for the mastery. "This man," said my friend, "is one of the higher order of spies. He holds office in the household of the pope, speaks English, and mingles in all companies." Every visitor in Rome is in like manner looked after. The police would have no difficulty in telling how any traveller spends any hour of the twenty-four during his sojourn in the Papal States. I had no sooner hired apartments in Rome than I found that a priest occupied the adjoining bed-room. "I do not wish to alarm you," said an Englishman, at whose place of business I called one day, "but I must tell you that you were followed by the police this morning to my shop: they

stood looking in through the glass-door all the while we were talking together."

The espionage on books and journals is even more rigid: Not a scrap of old newspaper can now cross the frontier. I read lately of an English lady who had wrapped her slippers in a copy of the *Times*, but had to unroll them and give up the peccant print before she could enter the Papal States. My own experience was similar. At the custom-house at Ceprano, coming from Naples, the papal functionaries carefully fished out of my carpet-bag everything in the shape of print, all pamphlets, and old Neapolitan newspapers, and, tying them up in a bundle, they sent them on before me to the police-office in Rome, where doubtless they were duly burned. It is but just to the Papal government, however, that I should state, and it may be useful to other travellers to know, that my Italian New Testament was not detained.

In Rome not a line can be published without passing through the censorship. This holds good not of books or newspapers only, but also of the placards in the streets. Not a bill can be posted on the walls unless it bears the pontifical *imprimatur*. One cannot advertise a stray dog, or offer a few swine for sale, or vend a hogshead of wine, or announce the sailing of a steam-boat, unless the placard is first duly authorised by being stamped with the papal seal, "the keys and tiara."

The people of the Papal States are wretchedly poor. In fact Rome is fed by the money which flows into it through the French troops, and the thousands of English and American travellers who annually resort to the Eternal city. But wonderful, and at the same time

deplorable, is it to think of the sums which are wrung out of the people by the minute and searching tyranny of a government which is itself poor to a byword. It was well said of old, "A poor man that oppresseth the poor is like a sweeping rain which leaveth no food." One of the main engines of fleecing the people is the government lottery; the church taking advantage of the passion for gambling, so deplorably prevalent among the Romans, to draw a few pitiful scudi into her coffers.

The drawing of the Roman lottery has been frequently described; but some features of the transaction I have not seen mentioned. The drawing takes place every Saturday at noon. It is held in the Piazza della Madonna, a large triangular space, overlooked on the one side by the "Ministry of Finance," and adorned on the other by an image of the Virgin, with two lamps burning before her. The crowd which covered the piazza was composed of the lowest class. A goodly number of shepherds from the Campagna were there, with profuse beards, sallow features,⁴ wolfish eyes, and a more brigandish look than belongs to the city population. Exactly at twelve o'clock the functionaries stepped upon the balcony. It was hung with scarlet cloth, emblazoned with the papal arms. Underneath, carved above the doorway of the "Ministry of Finance," was a nondescript monster, with scaly arms, strong talons, and great iron teeth in its open horrible mouth. The hydra altogether was so suggestive that I wondered the drapery was not made to descend a few inches lower in order to conceal it.

The first business was to verify the billets. This done, they were all put into a glass barrel. The billets

are only ninety in number ; still thousands may have bought into the lottery, for the Romans club their money, purchase a ticket, and if it happens to be drawn they divide the proceeds amongst the holders according to each one's share. A bishop is always present to sanction and sanctify the proceedings. But the most interesting person in the group. on the balcony is a pale-faced boy, of ten or twelve years old, in a bishop's beaver, who stands behind the barrel. He is an orphan, and on that account selected for his work, which is to draw out the tickets. Having no relatives, he is supposed to be under no temptation to partiality. The barrel is now whirled vigorously round, the trumpet strikes up a lively air, and the billets roll and dance in their glass prison. The motion is then reversed. It is a third time changed, and the billets are supposed to be now properly mixed. The door of the glass barrel is opened. The orphan solemnly lifts his beaver, makes the sign of the cross on his breast, and holding up his open palm, waves it slowly backwards and forwards in presence of the multitude, to show that all is " fair and above board." He then plunges his hand up to the wrist among the billets in the glass barrel, and seizing one draws it forth. He hands it to the bishop, who opens it and examines the number. The bishop then hands it to the judge, who also examines it. The judge passes it on to the crier, who, with stentorian voice, which rings over the now hushed and expectant multitude, sings out the number, and finally tosses the billet over the balcony amongst the crowd. This process is repeated five times, and the whole is ended. Of the ninety tickets which make up the lottery, five only are drawn out. The ceremonial completed, the group on

the balcony quickly vanished. The sullen faces that covered the piazza grew yet more sullen ; and one hulking fellow, as he strode past me, muttered a bitter curse, in which the name of the "Blessed" was mingled.

Rome is full of secret societies, which plot and counter-plot one another. Of the way in which these societies are recruited, and the terrors with which secrecy is enforced upon their members, some notion may be had from the following narration. In May, 1861, a young man, a Belgian, was shot as he was one night entering his hotel in the city. He was in good odour with the priests, for his father had contributed a large sum to Peter's Pence, and his death was a mystery. A fortnight afterwards another murder was attempted ; and this furnished some clue to the former. A Frenchwoman, who had lived several years in Rome as *couturière* to some fashionable dressmakers, called upon the head of the French police in Rome, and made a statement to the following effect. She said she had been led to listen to the overtures of a person who presented himself at her house in the dress of a priest, and who wished her to become a member of a clerico-political society, which had its head-quarters in Rome, with branches in Paris and the other capitals of Europe. The man, who was evidently French, offered ample remuneration in money and other benefits for her services, which were to be limited for the time to carrying correspondence to the houses she frequented in her capacity of sempstress. She consented, and entered the society. The next day she was waited on by the same person, who explained to her the objects and rules of the society, and told her that she would be sent to Paris, where she would be instructed as to her further

proceedings. This alarmed her. The person perceiving the fright into which he had thrown her, strove to dispel her fears, by assuring her that she would be amply compensated for any risks she might run, but that being a woman she was not so likely to be suspected as a man. She still refused to go to Paris. "Well," said the man, "I will give you a night to consider it; and to-morrow, should you consent to go, be so good as to wear a yellow ribbon, and, in the contrary case, a blue one." Next morning she was not more inclined to go to Paris than she had been on the evening before, and she mounted the corresponding colour. As she was entering a house the same forenoon she heard a voice say, "*Bleu, frappé!*" at the same instant she was seized by one man, while another struck her with a stiletto. Partly owing to her starting aside, and partly to steel which she wore in her corset, the blow did not take full effect, and before there was time to repeat it, two men happened to come up, and the assassins ran off.

The French police profited, doubtless, by the secrets which this woman communicated, but did not publish them. It was now known, however, that there existed in Rome a secret society, for the object of putting down "Revolutionary Novelties," as the phrase is; and it was inferred that the Belgian who was shot a fortnight before had been initiated into this society, and that, like the French sempstress, refusing to go to Paris, he was got rid of, lest he should divulge inconvenient secrets.*

The subject of brigandage, and the complicity of the papal government therewith, we must discuss in a few

* *Britannia*, MS. Journal.

sentences. It is regarded in Italy as an undeniable fact that the pope and his ministers enlist brigands, furnish them with arms and pay, and send them forth with the church's blessing to spread rapine and slaughter over the Neapolitan provinces. Hundreds of facts confirm this opinion. We have before us while we write, two volumes, clearly bringing home this guilt to the pope and the ex-King of Naples. The first is the "Report on the Brigandage in the Neapolitan Provinces,"* given into parliament by the commission appointed to investigate the matter. And the second is a "Historico-political Account of the Brigandage on the Pontifical Frontier, from 1860 to 1863."† The latter is by Count Saint Jorios, who was head of the staff of the general-in-chief on the station; and as the whole correspondence between the French and Italian commanders and the pontifical authorities passed through his hands, he had the very best opportunities of knowing the facts which he here relates.

The facts contained in these volumes clearly show that the plan of the brigandage was concocted at Rome, and that the operations are directed from that city. "The brigands are publicly enlisted at Rome," says Count Saint Jorios, "by the druggist Vanozzi, in the Campo de' Fiori, and by a certain Piccirilli, ex-sergeant in the former Bourbonic army, and captain in the band of Chiavoni; by the abate Ricci, and the priest Gonella, formerly sacristan of Santa Restituta, in Sora, who was

* *Il Brigantaggio nelle Province Napoletane. Relazione dei Deputati Massarie Castagnola.* Milan, 1863.

† *Il Brigantaggio alla Frontiera Pontificia dal 1860 al 1863: Studio Storico-politico-statistico morale-militare del Conte Alessandro Bianco di Saint Jorios.* Milan, 1864.

named a colonel by Francis II., and put at the head of a band of brigands; and by many others whose names it is not easy to discover. These brigands are collected and publicly formed into bands in the piazza Montanara, at Rome, and are afterwards distributed under their several captains, by whom they are paid, clothed, and accompanied to the frontier.

“The above-named Piccirilli, and Pietro Rondelli, of Pescosolido, and Bernardo Mancini, of Campoli, are the ordinary conductors of these small detachments of brigands to the frontier.”*

Similar arrangements to those in Rome, Count Saint Jorios affirms, have been made at Ceprano, at Frosinone, at Velletri (all in the Papal States), for equipping, lodging, and paying as many brigands as can be raised, and sending them off to the mountains for the purpose of laying waste the frontier. He also asserts that a department of the Communal Hospital, at Ceprano, had been converted into a barrack, and occupied by twelve soldiers of the papal cavalry, and fifty brigands. In many other places the papal buildings have been freely placed at the service of the brigands. Numerous convents in the Neapolitan territory have been stored with arms, ammunition, and provisions, and are simply centres of brigandage. Count Saint Jorios states that on the 26th of February, 1862, as many as two thousand brigands left Rome in a body, and proceeded to the frontier, of course separating into small parties before crossing. Priests have been taken fighting in their ranks. The brigands are often found decorated with the medal of the Immaculate Conception. In some of the churches a service has been

* *Il Brigantaggio alla Frontiera Pontificia*, pp. 239, 240.

instituted, termed the "Brigands' Mass," and for expedition's sake, those for whom it is intended are permitted on occasion to enter the church on horseback.*

When the operations against the brigands were first commenced, the French were in the habit of sending those they caught across the frontier, and delivering them up to the papal troops. Every man of them, after a short while, was equipped anew and sent back. Even to this day, when hard pressed, the brigands come down to Ceprano, and take the train to Rome, where comfortable lodgings await them. Last August (1864) the notorious Crocco, who has untold robberies and murders upon his head, avoided capture by repairing, with five followers, Spaniards, to the papal frontier, where he demanded to be taken to Rome. Instead of being sent in chains as a malefactor, he was furnished with a railway-ticket, and journeyed openly, with every sign of wealth about his person. He wore a gold watch, a massive gold chain traversed his breast, precious jewels sparkled on his fingers, and a profusion of military medals decorated his person. At Rome this worthy supporter of the throne and the altar was received with marked attention.

These facts scarcely require to be supplemented as proofs of the complicity of the papal government in this wholesale system of robbery and murder. Still we may add one or two others from the report given by the commission to the Italian parliament. The leader of a brigand-band, Pasquale Romano, who had held the district of Gioia in terror, was slain on the 5th of January, 1863. On his body, and in his portfolio, were found papers, "the importance of which," says the

* *Il Brigantaggio alla Frontiera Pontificia*, pp. 241-243.

report, "it would be impossible to over-estimate." Amongst others, a copy of the "Oath" taken by the brigands, with their names subscribed, was discovered. The oath consists of six clauses, of which the second is as follows:—"We promise and swear always to defend with our blood, God, the supreme pontiff Pius ix., and Francis II., King of the Two Sicilies, and the commander of our column, whose orders we shall obey, as God may aid and assist us ever to fight against the rebels of Holy Church."

Not less significant are the confessions of a brigand-leader, Pasquale Forgione, on the 23rd of February, 1863, before a committee appointed to examine him. The admissions of this man show that the oath is no mere form; that the brigands act thoroughly in its spirit; and that they regard their worst crimes as sanctified by the cause in which they are done. When asked why he should inflict such ravages on an unoffending community, Pasquale Forgione replied,—

"We fight for the faith."

"What do you mean by the faith?"

"The holy faith of our religion."

"But does not our religion execrate the robberies, burnings, murders, cruelties, and all the impious and barbarous deeds which you and your companions have committed?"

"We have fought for the faith, and have been blessed by the pope; and if we had not lost the paper which came from Rome we should have been able to convince you that we have combated for the faith."

"What paper was that?"

"It was a stamped paper which came from Rome."

"What did that paper contain?"

"It said that he who combated for the holy cause of the pope and of Francis II. committed no sin."

"Do you recollect what else that paper contained?"

"It said that the real brigands are the Piedmontese, who have taken away the kingdom from Francis II., and are excommunicated; but we are blessed of the pope."*

Not a line more need be quoted. These facts conclusively establish the complicity of the pope and the ex-King of Naples. The brigandage of Southern Italy is entirely of their concocting and maintaining, and at their door will posterity lay all the blood that has been shed by it.

The government pursues and punishes mainly crimes committed against itself. Offences against the person or property of the citizen it takes little account of. And when it does inquire into such offences its forms are so antiquated and tedious that the punishment falls rather upon the man who suffers than upon the man who inflicts the injury. There is, first of all, the utmost difficulty in procuring witnesses. Though the crime should be committed in open day, and in the crowded street, it is next to impossible to find any one who will admit that he saw it. The people, from passion and on system, retaliate on all who have had a hand in bringing their friends to justice. Hence, when a man is stabbed in the street every one looks the other way, or hurries from the scene, and if interrogated protests that he saw nothing. The people, moreover, finding that the government concerns itself but little about such deeds, take the law into their own hands, and one murder is generally followed by two or three others. Thus it

* *Il Brigantaggio nelle Province Napoletane*, pp. 67-70.

that there is not a spot in all Europe where blood is so freely shed as in the Papal States, although, from the absence of everything like definite statistics, not half the murders that take place are reported.

Another obstruction in the way of the punishment of crime at Rome is the harassing and endless delays of the tribunals. Witnesses must give repeated attendance in court; they suffer in consequence great loss of time, but receive no compensation whatever.

The following case will illustrate this. One night in November, 1863, an hour after dark, a man was brought into a café, where our informant happened to be, in the piazza San Lorenzo, in Lucina. The man had been stabbed by robbers, and was picked up in the Via Campo Marzo by some French soldiers. One of them went to the stand close by for a cab, but the *cocchiere*, notwithstanding the entreaties and threats of the soldiers, refused to take the wounded man to the hospital in his coach, declaring that he would rather go to prison for a night than lose his time for months by attendance on the tribunals. The soldiers had nothing for it but to carry the wounded man to the hospital of San Giacomo themselves.

Even when a robbery is committed in the streets, people, so far from arresting the thief, pretend not to see what is going on. The insecurity of life and property are such that it is dangerous to display a knowledge, or even a suspicion, of crime. A tinman, employed many years by an English mercantile house in Rome, was stabbed by a thief. The fellow had passed the door of the workshop with the stolen goods, and the tinman looked very hard at him, as if to say, "I know what you're about." The robber at once turned upon him and

attacked him as stated. The man died of his wounds, and his murderer—though tried and condemned to the galleys for life, for he was not of age to incur the capital penalty—never assigned any other provocation in justification of himself save the significant look given him by the other. This fact explains another. In December, 1863, a teacher of languages was robbed of his watch and gold chain as he was entering his house in the piazza San Carlo. He ran after the thief, pursuing him all the way to the Via della Croce, and shouting out at the top of his voice, "Stop thief!" The street is one of those which are well lighted and much frequented, and yet, though the robber kept his way right in the midst of the crowd of people, no one attempted to stop him, and, as almost always happens in such cases, he got safe off. The Romans have a saying, that "No one is safe in Rome, save thieves and murderers."

The law of criminal justice in Rome is, that the person nearest the scene of murder is to be held as having done the deed till he has discovered the real murderer, or in some other way cleared himself of the crime. This law most effectually deprives the victim of all help. A French lady, happening one day to come upon a man lying in the street with a stiletto in his breast, humanely pulled out the weapon. For this Samaritan act she was imprisoned; and, although two witnesses came forward to attest that her only connexion with the deed was of an accidental and humane kind, it was not till the French ambassador came forward with repeated remonstrances that she was let go. Had she been a Jewess she very probably would, to this day, have been in prison or in a convent.

If the cardinals are somewhat slow in punishing

murderers, they make amends by a most praiseworthy zeal for the conversion of Jews. A member of the Hebrew nation was arrested for robbery, and the evidence, though circumstantial, being strongly against him, he was on the point of being condemned, when an unexpected event rescued him from a fate that appeared inevitable. It is customary to baptize a Jew, at a certain season, every year at Rome. The season had come round; but no proselyte was forthcoming. The Jew in question piously read his recantation, and forthwith, instead of being led to the scaffold, he was led to the baptismal font!

The morality of the Eternal city has not of late improved, nor does it give promise of doing so. In addition to the evil-doers of all kinds which the soil of Rome so plentifully nourishes—producing felons as of old heroes—every week a fresh supply is had from without, in the shape of brigands, driven by stress of weather to seek asylum on “the threshold of the Apostles,” and who bring with them to that “sacred seat” their mountain morality. These new-comers seldom permit the stiletto to rust. Let us open *Il Témoporale* and run our eye over its columns for the first days of last July. What an array of crime! Two murders on Monte Mario; an assassination of a lady at Castelfidardo; the robbery of a vineyard and its keeper outside the Porta Pia; other robberies the same evening two miles outside the Porta del Popolo; the robbery of an artisan the same forenoon in the Via Tre Madonne; the robbery of the Trattoria Spillman the evening before; the attack by brigands four miles beyond the Porta Salara, on three carters, wounding two and killing the third, although so near the police-station at Ponte Salara that

the *gensdarmes* might have heard the cries. Such is the history of the first week of July, 1864, at Rome. It is the same sad tale all the year round. There is a dreadful monotony of crime. No wonder that *Il Temporale*, after this tragic recital, should apostrophise the Romans in a style of cutting irony thus:—"O happy dwellers in this oasis of the world—this blessed clime where love reigns, and all that is holy flourishes. Your cash you may lose, but stores of indulgences will always remain to you. You may be suddenly robbed of goods and of life: but be consoled, you are sure of Paradise."*

Two other illustrative cases may be adduced, which occurred in the same month (July, 1864). The wife of a vine-dresser in Rome going out one day, and being careful to shut the door of her house behind her, found it open on her return. On entering she met a robber within, who demanded her valuables. Going to a chest where she kept her more precious articles, she took them out and threw them into a corner of the apartment. The robber stooped to gather them, and while in the act of doing so the woman, seizing a stiletto, struck him a blow, which laid him prostrate on the floor, where he was found in his blood when her husband returned.

In the same month a tobacconist in the Via Bullaria returning to his house found two men busy robbing it. Drawing a knife from its sheath, he made at one of the thieves. The fellow escaped at the door and gained the piazza, but was followed by the man, who stabbed him, and left him to die on the street. "Priests, brigands, assassins, thieves," exclaims *Il Temporale*, "are the

* *Il Temporale*, July 1-10, 1864.

moral products which flourish under the sceptre of the Grand Lama ! Who after this would question the enviable happiness of being governed by priests ! Behold what store of justice, security, and morality is to be found in this happy clime ! Praise the Lord with gladness, oh ye happy Romans ; for under the benignant shadow of the tiara, righteousness and peace gloriously shine forth. *Evviva il Papa-re.*"*

* *Il Temporale*, July, 1864.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A GLANCE AT THE FUTURE.

THE facts contained in the foregoing pages will enable the reader to judge what progress Italy is making towards its emancipation from the papal yoke. It is to the Christian that this question will yield, in its highest degree, the interest that belongs to it; but men of every class must feel its importance. It were impossible to imagine an event which would, at this hour, more immediately and beneficially affect the condition of the whole world than the creation of an enlightened community, and the establishment of a free government south of the Alps.

To the scholar and the man of science, the emancipation of Italy cannot be other than an object of intense and supreme desire. A new worker would thereby be introduced into the mental field. For generations a great light has been missing from the sky of Europe. The genius of Italy has long been lost to the civilised world. Yet who knows not what that genius achieved in earlier times? To it we owe those compositions which after the lapse of two thousand years are among our best models of style. Nor need we recall the splendour, unhappily but momentary, with which the Italian muse burst forth at the era of the *Renaissance*—the grandeur of Dante, the pathos of Petrarch, the

beauty of Boccaccio, and the manly periods and strong sense of Poliziano. These proved to the men of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries that the genius of Italy was not dead, but slumbered. Let the fetters that bind it be burst asunder, and who can tell what new lessons of wisdom and what new forms of beauty the Italian muse, refreshed by sleep, may yet furnish wherewith to enrich the literature of Europe? Let Italy but receive the anointing of a pure Christianity, and she might stir us by loftier orations than those of Cicero, instruct us by greater histories than that of Tacitus, and entrance us with lays sweeter and holier than those of Virgil.

The man of commerce, equally with the man of letters, must view with deepest interest the emancipation of Italy. With that event would come an instantaneous expansion of the trade of Europe. The material resources of Italy are almost incalculable. There is no limit to the corn and oil and wine which it might pour into the markets of the world. And yet for centuries Italy has been as unproductive as regards the public wealth as if, instead of a country of fertile plains, it had been an expanse of arid sands. The soil of Italy has been as completely lost to trade as its genius has been lost to literature. The unskillfulness and indolence of the people, qualities induced by the dwarfing superstition in which they have been reared, and the oppressive government under which they have lived, have completely neutralised all their advantages of climate. But let an industrious population possess that land, and we should see a paradise where now there is little but a desert. Every harbour, every warehouse, every railway, and every market in Europe would in-

stantly feel the change. The merchant may take no great interest in the settlement of Italy as a question of mere creed, but let him see, as assuredly he would see, once that question were settled, a million more of ploughs upon the plains of Italy, a million more of vine-dressers upon its mountains, a million more of looms in its cities, and a vast increase of the ships that ply between its shores and the rest of Europe; and let him see, moreover, the mines, forges, and workshops of Great Britain all busier than ever, toiling to supply ever-growing demands for the implements of husbandry and the tools of handicraft, of which the Italians are at this hour in most deplorable need, then would he feel what vast material interests had depended on the settlement of this question—what a loss to the commerce and wealth of the world had been the popery of Italy, and what a gain to both its overthrow.

But to the statesman, even more than to the man of letters, or the man of commerce, must the emancipation of Italy be a matter of the last importance. To Europe and the world there can be no repose, no guarantee of lasting peace, while the Italian question remains unsolved. Over every one of its nations will hang suspended the sword of war. The day of battle may be postponed, but it will ever be seen in the distance, imposing on governments, already on the eve of bankruptcy, the necessity of maintaining armies, of providing munitions of war, and of raising yet larger sums from their already overburdened subjects.

But where, one is tempted to ask, is the difficulty of settling this question? Why should a territory so contemptibly diminutive be suffered to embroil the whole of Europe? For it is ever to be borne in mind that it

is not Italy, but an insignificant portion of Italy—the Papal States—which causes all this disquiet. Let us mount to the top of St. Peter's, and survey the pope's temporal domains. From the summit of the dome the eye ranges over almost every foot of the papal kingdom. There on the north are the rugged and classic heights of Soracte, marking the boundary of the States of the Church on that side. Follow the line of the Apennines on the east, as they sweep on in a glorious circle and enclose the plain. The sway of the pope extends not beyond these mountains; indeed, some of the white towns which glitter on their sides are outside his kingdom. On the south, some thirty miles from our point of view, the eye penetrates the opening amid the Volscian hills, where the ancient Frosinone looks down upon Ceprano. There is the frontier towards Naples. On the west is seen the Mediterranean. The desolate plain beneath us, so bounded, is all that remains to the tiara. We have provincial cities in Britain which have a larger population than the Papal States.

The shrunk dimensions of this petty, but proud kingdom received an illustration of a somewhat amusing kind the summer before last. A man of some seventy years was apprehended at Rome, and ordered into banishment. The man urged that neither in word nor in deed had he offended, and demanded to know why he should banish himself. It did not suit the pontifical government to assign reasons, but they renewed their order, more peremptorily than before, that he should be gone. "Very well," replied he, with caustic humour, "your dominions are not now so very large but that, provided you give me just two days, I shall mount an ass and ride out of them."

Why then should this miserable bit of territory on the western shore of the Peninsula be suffered to remain the plague-spot of Europe—the focus of its earthquakes, the maelstrom of its intrigues and revolutions? Why not annex it to the kingdom of Italy, and have done with all the turmoil growing out of it? Surely it needs but a word from the powerful sovereigns of France and Italy, and this trumpery monarchy would vanish! A kingdom without an army, without a fleet, without a revenue, and compelled to perambulate Europe to beg “a penny for Peter,”* can present surely no insuperable difficulty. Why not say at once to the seventy old men in red at Rome, “We cannot afford to go on thus, raising soldiers by the thousand, contracting debts by the million, and living in hourly dread of revolution or war, simply that you may have temporal principedoms. No: let your spiritual office content you.”

But is it just herein that Rome is shown to be “mystery.” *Mystery* was the name given her before she rose. Her existence all along has been a mystery to the world. When she trod on kings, and filled the earth with her glory, she was a mystery; and now that she sits in the dust, discrowned in effect, and soliciting, with piteous voice, protection and alms, she is a mystery still—for she has the art to strike kings with dread, and to exercise over nations a power which they can neither explain nor withstand.

In truth, *Rome* is not the kingdom that is seen, it is the kingdom that is not seen; Rome is not that little bit of wasted territory on the Italian

* In most public places in Catholic Europe, especially at the doors of churches, one sees little boxes with a slit in the lid, and the words, “*Denaro per Pietro.*”

shore. Rome is that great spiritual kingdom whose dark shadow is stretched over two-thirds of Western Europe. She sits enthroned upon the conscience of the nations. She has a kingdom in the minds of men. To a power like this what matters a few thousand acres more or less? Her weapons of war are the superstitions of the blinded masses. Herein lies the real difficulty of the Emperor of France and the King of Italy. They fight against a great spiritual confederacy, which still reigns with supreme power over the minds of their subjects. The priesthood perfectly comprehend the vantage-ground which they occupy, and hence their defiant attitude, despite their vanishing temporal territory. They know that there is no king in Catholic Europe who dare proclaim open war against them. For the moment he did so, abysses would open before him, and behind him, and underneath him, and the loss of his throne might be the penalty of attacking their power.

In truth, the Church of Rome is to this hour the strongest confederacy on the earth. She covers a larger territory than any known kingdom. She has more numerous servants than any other power. She has thousands of agents whom she acknowledges, and thousands more whom she does not acknowledge—men who have passed through a peculiar training, who excel in mental acuteness and craft, who penetrate deeper into society, and farther into the human heart, than other men, and who bring motives to bear upon the mind which others cannot wield, and who, although spread over the whole earth, are united, act promptly, have but one interest, and that interest centring in the papal chair. This is a combination of moral and

mental power, compared with which that of other governments is as nothing. This moral power gives Rome the command of vast material force, which she will not hesitate to use when the decisive hour shall come.

The mass of the Italian people still blindly obey the church. They distinguish betwixt the *government* of the pope and the *religion* of the pope. The former they detest; to the latter they still cleave. A longer sojourn than the author ever before made in that land has given him a deeper impression than he ever before had of the innate strength of the papal system, and the fearful hold it has taken of the Italian people. The Italians perceive in Popery neither error nor absurdity. The faculty that perceives and judges is destroyed; and while Popery has blighted the conscience and the reason, it has nourished into overmastering strength all the passions which find in it their nutriment. Were it not for one's confidence in "the sure word of prophecy," one would despair of the emancipation of that people. "Italy is still Catholic," said an intelligent Waldensian, a former member of the Italian parliament, and a friend of Cavour's, to us one day, "and Catholic Italy cannot do without her pope."

"Were the pope to die to-morrow," we asked a member of the Evangelical Church in Milan, "what would happen the day after?" "We should have another," he instantly replied.

A friend of the author's, who recently visited Rome, asked of his *cicerone*, "What will you do with the pope?" The *cicerone* appeared a most devout man, and duly said his prayers in every church and holy place which he entered. "Will you," continued our friend, "provide lodgings for him in Jerusalem?" "Jeru-

saalem!" exclaimed the other, his voice rough with anger: "put him down the throat of Vesuvius." This man is the picture of his nation. He was at once a disloyal subject of the pontiff and a faithful son of the church. So is it with the country. Italy is in insurrection against the pope as king. She bows down before the pope as priest. She deems the Papacy the glory of her past, the hope of her future.

In truth, Italy is working at an impossible problem. She seeks at once to conserve the Papacy and to retain the Constitution—to be both a popish country and a free country—loyal subjects of Victor Emmanuel, and faithful sons of the Vicar of Christ. This policy is in opposition to the manifest design of Providence. Providence is working for the overthrow of the Papacy. Italian statesmen are striving to preserve it. This policy is in opposition to the teachings of experience. The Italians themselves acknowledge that the disunion of Italy in former times mainly proceeded from Rome; and yet they plan how to preserve in the future that which was a source of division and weakness in the past. This policy is opposed to the lessons of the present. The statesmen of Italy are fully aware that the great stumbling-block in the path of the country at this hour is the power of the priesthood; and yet their policy, so far from contemplating the removal, contemplates the continuance of that great stumbling-block.

In truth, both Italian statesmen and the Italian people have yet to learn what it is that constitutes true freedom. It has a body which is a free constitution, and it has a soul which is a free conscience, and it needs not one but both to give actual liberty. Italy has the body of liberty—a free constitution; but she lacks the

soul—a free conscience. At the centre of her constitution, where there ought to sit an enfranchised conscience, there sits a crowned monk.

In order to estimate the gravity of the crisis which has arrived in the affairs of Europe, there are several things which it is necessary to take into account. There is, *first*, the relation of the temporal power to the European system, and the effect its suppression would have upon the political order of the world; and there is, *second*, the attitude in which the Papacy, as exhibited in its recent developments, now stands to the progress of society. An intelligent consideration of these two things will give us some idea of the strength of that antagonism which has grown up between Catholicism and civilisation, and the equal necessity and difficulty of finding some means of modifying or annihilating that antagonism.

As regards the relation of the temporal power to the European system, it is a relation of equilibrium or equipoise. There are some Protestants, perhaps we ought to say a majority, who think that the tiara has no relations outside the States of the Church, and that the extinction of the papal sovereignty would create no blank in Europe, and have no disturbing effect upon surrounding governments. The dominions of the priest-king, say they, are already shrunk into insignificance, and what little remains may be trampled out without difficulty or danger. We are not of the number who so think. In the triple crown Catholic Europe finds its centre of union—the pivot on which its political organisations revolve. In the middle ages the Papacy created the Empire as the shadow of itself, the minister of its will, through which it might exercise a general

suzerainty over the European nations. But ever since the decadence of the Empire, the Papacy itself has been that suzerain, and has formally discharged that function which aforetime it discharged more covertly, through the Empire. It is in the triple crown that the church, viewed as a graduated organisation or hierarchy, finds its culminating point; and it is in the triple crown that Europe, viewed as a confederation of kingdoms professing the Catholic faith, finds its point of equipoise or rest. The temporal power, or, as the phrase is, "the independence of the holy father," is therefore a first necessity of political Catholic Europe. It is not necessary that the pope should have a large territory, or that he should have numerous subjects; but certainly it is necessary, Europe continuing to be Catholic, that the head of the church should be independent and sovereign.

Such being the constitution of the European commonwealth, the abolition of the temporal power would destroy at once the unity of the church, and the equilibrium of Catholic Europe. It would be the signal for a general break-up. It would give us a new Europe.

But, say some, why should it be so? What greater difficulty is there in the Bishop of Rome becoming simply the bishop, and as such being a subject of Victor Emmanuel, and primate of all Italy, than in the Archbishop of Canterbury being a subject of Queen Victoria, and primate of all England? There is a very great difference indeed between these two things. To illustrate that difference, let us suppose that you have stripped the pope of his temporal power, that you have reduced him to the simple rank of bishop of Rome and spiritual head of the Catholic Church. What then? The pope is a subject of the King of Italy, of course.

He is the first prelate of his realm. But we are to bear in mind—and this is the ruling element in the question—that the pope is a subject with an empire; an empire far wider, having more numerous subjects, and governed with a higher and more irresistible power, than that of the monarch whose subject he is. So much the better, it will be said, for the King of Italy. The pope will bring to Victor Emmanuel a second kingdom; for, being master of the pope, the King of Italy will be master of the Catholic Church. This is the very point we wish to bring out; for it is precisely here that the difficulty presses. If the Catholic Church were confined to Italy it would be a matter of perfect indifference to the rest of Europe whether the pope was or was not a subject of Victor Emmanuel. But the Catholic Church includes France, Spain, Austria—the whole of un-Reformed Christendom, as well as Italy. It extends from the cities of Japan to the prairies of America. The bishops of the whole Catholic world are bound by feudal oath to the pope; the priests to the bishops, and the lay members to the priests. Thus an infallible power chains all consciences to the head of the church; but that head of the church is a subject of the King of Italy, a dependent on royal favour, and a pensioner on state bounty, and just as the popes were the tools of the Kings of France when they resided at Avignon, so would they be again, residing at the Court of Florence or Rome, the tools of the Kings of Italy. Who does not see that this would most effectually destroy the equilibrium of the European kingdoms? for to the temporal power of the Italian monarchs, it would add, in fact, the spiritual power of the whole Catholic world. The tiara would be merged in the crown; and the chair of Peter, with all its illi-

mitable attributes, its power over consciences, and its indirect political supremacy, would be conjoined with the seat of the Italian monarchs. This would be a virtual restoration of the Holy Roman Empire. Let us suppose that a war should break out between France and Italy. On the one side the war would be carried on with temporal weapons, but on the other with both temporal and spiritual; for the King of Italy would, through the pope his subject, array the bishops and priests of France against their monarch. There might be some who would prefer their temporal to their spiritual allegiance, but the majority would feel constrained by conscience to obey the commands of their spiritual chief, which would appear to them the commands of God.

Thus the suppression of the temporal power, and the annexation of the tiara to the crown of Italy, carries in it a formidable menace to the other monarchs of Europe. They neither can nor will consent to such an arrangement. Their interests demand the independence of the pontificate; and, as M. Thiers said in the Legislative Assembly, "there is no independence for the pontificate but sovereignty."

But let us suppose that, nevertheless, the temporal sovereignty of the pope shall be put an end to—that with the departure from Rome of the last French battalion the tiara vanishes. What then? France, Austria, and all the Catholic kingdoms, would, sooner or later, separate from the see of Rome, and erect themselves into independent national churches. A regard for their own independence, and their internal quiet, would leave them no other alternative; for they could not permit the primate of another monarch to appoint to

sees and control the clergy within their own realm. But the erection of national churches all over Europe implies the break-up of the popedom as a universal power; the descent of the Eternal city from the rank she has held these twelve centuries as head of a great spiritual empire; and the annihilation of the cement which holds Catholic Europe together, and binds it into one body. No man is able to foresee the political and social convulsions which such a schism would draw after it. When we take into account the struggles which the priesthood would make to restore Catholicism, the divergent policies which would be certainly adopted by the various sovereigns, and the masses of free-thinking and revolution which would instantly be set loose and put in motion, it would be one of the greatest marvels in all history should Europe accomplish the transition without the prolonged agony of a terrible conflict.

With the desire of averting these dangers, which are already seen to be closing round Europe, many expedients have been propounded, but, alas! not one of them is satisfactory. Cavour's solution of the difficulty is well known; its epigrammatic brevity and point having rendered it memorable—"A free church in a free state." That of Abbé Passaglia is but a reiteration of Cavour's. "Give us," says the abbé, "the separation of the sceptre from the keys."* Guizot, who although a Protestant, pleads for the maintenance of the pope's temporal sovereignty, and denounces Cavour's project of dethroning the pontiff as "one of the strongest acts of usurpation known to history," and an attack, in

* *Pro Causa Italica ad Episcopos Catholicos, auctore Presbytero Catholico.* Florence, 1861.

fact, on the rights of Catholics in Spain, in France, in England, and all over the world,* recommends, as the only solution which the question admits of, that the Church of Rome should abjure the dogma of authority, recognise the right of private judgment, and proclaim the incompetence of force in matters of belief.† These attempts at solution awaken but little hope in those minds that really understand the difficulty; they only show how small a way the strongest intellects in Europe have made towards fathoming the full extent of the problem with which they are dealing. There is not one of them which is not open to the objections we have already urged,—and to a great many besides. But on these objections it is useless to dwell, seeing the Encyclical of the pope, issued December 8, 1864, has put all these proposals out of date, and brings the matter to this plain issue, that either the Papacy or civilisation must perish.

In the Encyclical the pope has recast the whole doctrine of the church as to the temporal power. And it is most significant that so far from recasting it in the sense of modifying it, and so paving the way for a reconciliation of the Papacy with the public sentiment of Europe, and breaking his fall from sovereignty, he has enthroned the temporal power higher than ever. Pio Nono, at this hour, stands fully abreast of Innocent III. and the mightiest of the pontifical chiefs. All the changes which have been made in the temporal supremacy—not upon the thing itself, but upon the manner of stating and of exercising it—since the

* *L'Eglise et la Société Chrétienne*, pp. 45, 46.

† See his chapters, *L'Eglise Catholique en Italie*, and *L'Eglise Catholique et la Liberté*.

Reformation, are repudiated; Bellarmine's theory of "indirect temporal power," and De Maistre's and Dr. Wiseman's theory of "direction," go by the board; and the Encyclical claims for the pope *direct* temporal power, invests him with jurisdiction over kings and princes, and gives him the right to employ force in matters of faith. The Encyclical, moreover, teaches that monarchs hold their thrones, and subjects pay their allegiance, only on the condition of conforming to the faith and worship of Rome; that no other religion is to be allowed; that toleration of conscience is a crime against society; that free schools, free presses, and free opinions, are to be put down. It declares that the temporal sovereignty was not given by the civil power, and cannot be taken away by it; that, on the contrary, it is a right inherent in and essential to the Papacy, and by consequence that the prince or nation which attacks the temporal sovereignty is attacking the church, and is fighting against Christianity itself.

As a precaution, not to meet but to defy possible changes, the Encyclical further ties the popedom for ever to the Seven Hills and the see of Rome, and condemns the proposition that the pontificate may be transferred to another bishop or another state; and, by way of anticipation, fulminates excommunication against any who shall break the unity of the body by erecting national churches. Such is the reply of the pope to the demands of the Romans, to the conciliatory advances of the Italians, and to the entreaties or menaces of princes. Men were persuading themselves that now, when the eleventh hour had struck, as they believed, and the Franco-Italian convention, like the hand-writing on the wall, was announcing that the days of

his temporal kingdom were numbered, the pope would bow to destiny, and exhibit to the world the edifying spectacle of meekly setting his house in order. Not so, Pio Nono. Not a line of the canon law does he blot out. On the contrary, he re-enacts and republishes its every dogma. He summons back upon the world the Papacy of the thirteenth century; and, as if the spirit of Hildebrand or of Innocent had entered into him, he stands proudly forth, surveying with kindling eye the gathering tempests, and challenging, with defiant voice, the foes whom he feels himself able to meet and quell.

The Encyclical says to the statesmen of Italy, and indeed to the statesmen of every country, what the pontiff had said more compendiously before in the *non possumus*:—When you have abjured constitutional government, pronounced the toleration it embodies a delirium, erased from the statute-book all laws passed since 1860, and restored the reign of divine right—then may Italy be reconciled with the Papacy. When you have made restitution of every acre of the church lands, restored the conventual buildings to the friars, reinvested the clergy in immunity from civil control, burned every Bible you have permitted to enter Italy, and razed every conventicle which defiles its soil—then may Italy be reconciled to the Papacy. When you have closed every school, silenced every printing-press, and consigned to oblivion every book on morals, philosophy, and science, which modern times have produced, then will come the time to celebrate on the Capitol the espousals of Italy and the Papacy. Till then, *non possumus*.

In truth, the pope's Encyclical is the brand of the caliph Omar over again. It is a blazing torch

flung into the temple of knowledge and liberty with intent to burn it to the ground. If the pope's power were equal to his wish, the Encyclical would leave us, of all the intellectual labours and moral achievements of these three centuries, nothing but ashes.

But the movement is not to be so arrested. The Renaissance fell before the Inquisition in the sixteenth century, because then it stood alone. Now, however, it advances with a numerous host in its train—constitutional ideas, a free press, the spirit of nationalities—and if a way is not made for it, it will make a way for itself; but that may be over the ruins of the present European system. Meanwhile the gaze of Europe is fixed upon the expiry of the two years of the famous convention of the 15th September, 1864.* What will happen then is hid from the eyes of all living. For that supreme hour every government in Europe is on the watch, drilling soldiers, providing the munitions of war, and making ready for a crisis which all feel to be of unexampled gravity. Louis Napoleon has pledged himself in the face of Europe to complete his evacuation of Rome by the end of the two years. We have no reason to think that he will not redeem his pledge. If, unhappily, he should not, will the vast impatience of the Italians to possess Rome permit them longer to sit still, with their army of half a million? If Napoleon does withdraw; what then? "A revolution in Rome," all say, "with its accompanying horrors;" "and, lo," to use the language of the priests, "the back-door by which the Italians hope to enter." But the danger is too obvious to be permitted to happen, in the form, at least, in

* The period will run out, according to some, on 1st January, 1867, according to others, in March, 1867.

which it is foretold. In some way or other, the priesthood will anticipate the stroke. But how? The hours are running out, and yet the pope makes no preparations. He enlists no soldiers; he plants no cannon on the walls of Rome; he does not even borrow an army from Spain or Austria. This were too clumsy a device for so astute a power as the Vatican. Is he then prepared at the eleventh hour to retract his *NON POSSUMUS*? Never. He will sooner die amid the ruins of Rome. Does he mean then to sit still, steadfastly confiding in the Virgin of the Immaculate Conception? Doubtless; but not on her alone. On this, as on every former occasion, he will supplement the aids of heaven by the counsels of earth. The course to be followed has already been resolved upon. It has been whispered in the depths of the Vatican; but not an echo of the plan has been permitted to reach the outer world. Rome makes her "shadow as the night in the midst of the noon-day."

But deeply veiled as are her purposes, they may be guessed at. She descries and hails a coming revolution. What! we exclaim, does Rome really welcome a power so destructive, and apparently so uncontrollable? Yes. She will, perhaps, permit revolution to flow over Europe, in the hope that, after it has spent its fury, it will leave her mistress of the situation. In this way did great revolutions in former times work. Instead of submerging, they raised Rome to a loftier position. The Gothic revolution in the fifth century overthrew the empire, while it gave new dominion and glory to the church. The revolution in the eighteenth century, which changed all the governments of Western Europe, issued eventually in the profounder submission of the nations to the

sway of the priesthood. The revolution of 1848, which chased the pope from Rome, had, as its closing act, the triumphant return from Gaeta. Borrowing, in the present crisis of her history, her precedents from former great epochs, there is reason to think that the same bold experiment may be again adventured upon. Rome—by which we mean not the pope and cardinals only, but the body of the priesthood planted throughout all countries—Rome will take her stand on her *non possumus*, and await, on this rock, the great upheaval which would most surely uplift a world from its foundations; and, when it has come, hostile kings will be engulfed, inimical factions will wreak their vengeance on one another, and when the work of social ruin is completed, and men, weary and disheartened, seek for some principle of order, the church, in the persons of her priests, will come forth from her hiding-place, and speaking words of peace to the now chastened and humbled nations, will invite them to seek shelter within the old bulwarks of Catholicism. So does Rome reckon at this hour.

We must repeat it, the strength of that church lies not in political alliances, not in the strength of armies, but in the superstition of the masses. She is far more minutely and accurately acquainted with the prevailing disposition of the various European populations than any statesman in Europe. She has far greater control over them. Her emissaries by hundreds of thousands are continually busy among them. Of the masses, many have fallen away, she knows, but those who remain loyal to her cause far outnumber those who have deserted it. To these, we venture to predict, she will make her final appeal. The tocsin will be sounded from the seven hills, and a holy war will be preached by

thousands of voices throughout the realms of Catholicism. And who shall say with what result? Let Rome, stripped of her last penny and her last acre, go forth to the world as a mendicant and a martyr, who knows but the nations, forgetful of the wrongs they suffered at her hands, and pitying her misfortunes, may yet be seized with a fit of penitence, and lead her back in triumph to her seat of ancient dominion.

Having regard only to the bearing of former precedents, and taking into account the operation of that law by which reaction inevitably follows anarchy, the calculation of Rome would be sure to be fulfilled. But the disposition of the peoples of Europe are not now what they were at former epochs. Constitutional ideas have made great progress amongst them since 1848; the essential tyranny of the Church of Rome has been of late burned into their minds. Should the church provoke a revolution, it may be doubted whether, after it has spent its fury, the masses would seek, as they did in other times, the harbour of Catholicism. Besides, events appear about to leave their ordinary course. The Great Ruler is coming down to earth, in the way of putting forth an influence on the world which may baffle, by some unexpected and startling turn, the calculations of Rome, and so the tempest, instead of wafting her to dominion, may plunge her in an abyss from which she shall rise no more.*

* Since the above chapter was written, the author had the good fortune to spend a day with Professor Ranke, of Berlin. There was perhaps no man in all Europe whose views on the present condition and prospects of the Papacy the author was more desirous to hear than the illustrious author of the "History of the Popes." Nor did Professor Ranke make the least difficulty in frankly and fully communicating his views. He believes that Louis Napoleon will faithfully

Great jubilee of the world ! "The keystone in the arch of European despotism is at Rome." So said an eloquent Italian some years ago. Never was a truer word written. It expresses the whole philosophy of the politics of Europe. And yet, had the writer gone a little farther, he would have even more comprehensively embodied the truth. The keystone in the arch of the world's despotism is at Rome. Knock that keystone out, and what a crash would follow ! What a scattering of tyrants ! What a bursting open of prisons ! What a dispersing of black clouds ! What a glorious burst of sunlight ! And what a shout of joy would roll round the earth ! Nation would pass on the song to nation. Tribe after tribe would lift up its voice and swell the triumphal peal, and, caught up by all the kindreds of the earth, it would rise into a loftier and yet loftier hosanna, till at last it would realise that very event which stands foretold in one of the noblest of prophetic anthems, in which nature is represented as becoming entranced by the deep joy of the nations and

execute the convention ; that the pope will be obliged to go into exile ; that the sight of the humiliations and misfortunes of the Papacy will revive the slumbering zeal of the Catholics throughout Europe ; and that the result, after a while, will be the restoration of the Popedom to its old city and its temporal sovereignty, which it may be able to retain for one or two centuries to come. These views are entitled to profound respect ; unhappily Professor Ranke has but too many and too good grounds on which to maintain them ; still the author does not coincide with them in all their extent. The demonstration, as worked out in actual history, of the essential antagonism between the Papacy and civilisation, is now perfect and complete ; and this fact, the contrariety, to wit, between Catholicism and progress, is now impressed upon the general mind of the Catholic nations in a way it never was before. The idea steadily gains ground that Catholicism is not an asylum but a prison. "Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird."

bursting out in sympathetic and responsive utterances. The sea roars, the floods clap their hands, the trees sing for joy, and the hills rejoice, while man shouts forth his praise in these magnificent strains:—"O sing unto the Lord a new song, for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand and his holy arm hath gotten him the victory. The Lord hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly showed in the sight of the heathen. He hath remembered his mercy and his truth towards the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God."

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